

KINHΣΙΣ AKINHΤΟΣ
A STUDY OF SPIRITUAL MOTION
IN THE
PHILOSOPHY OF PROCLUS

PHILOSOPHIA ANTIQUA

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W. J. VERDENIUS AND J. H. WASZINK

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S. E. GERSH

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PREFACE

This study is devoted to a central problem in the philosophy of Proclus, that of 'spiritual motion'. Its subject-matter consists more precisely of a group of dynamic metaphysical concepts. Its method is that of philosophical analysis, for it aims to examine the relationship of these concepts to one another within Proclus' general ontological and logical scheme. I hope that it can be considered to break new ground from both these points of view, since the subject-matter has perhaps not been investigated with sufficient care in the past, while the few earlier discussions have been mainly descriptive and historical in method, making little pretence to philosophical evaluation.

The result is a rather abstract study. This is, I am afraid, inevitable in the case of an analysis of fundamental principles, for the most basic assumptions of any metaphysical system are likely to be abstract, and this is particularly the case with a philosopher of the Athenian School of Neoplatonism. However, the explanation of fundamental principles is essential during the earliest stages in the process of coming to understand a philosopher's doctrines, and the study of Proclus, despite some significant advances in the last fifty years, is still very much in its infancy.

I must express my indebtedness to Prof. W. K. C. Guthrie of Cambridge and to Prof. W. Beierwaltes of Münster. Both of these scholars gave up their valuable time in reading substantial portions of an earlier draft of this work, and made many helpful suggestions about its content and presentation. I have also gained much from the discussion of certain problems with Dr D. O'Brien, and without his constant encouragement this study might never have been published.

University of Cambridge
Sept. 1972

S.E.G.

CITATIONS

(a) TEXTS: Citations from the *Elements of Theology* are by the pages and lines of Dodds' edition (cf. BIBLIOGRAPHY p. 136). The *Platonic Theology* is cited according to the pages of the edition of Portus (1618). At the time of writing, only the first book has appeared in the new edition of Saffrey and Westerink, and to preserve uniformity I have continued to cite Portus' pages even when using the text of the modern version. Saffrey and Westerink quote the earlier numbering in their inside margin. Citations from the *Alcibiades Commentary* are by the paragraphs and lines of Westerink's edition, while the commentaries on the *Cratylus*, *Republic*, and *Timaeus* are cited according to the volumes, pages, and lines of the Teubner texts. The same applies in the case of the *Euclid Commentary*. Citations from the *Parmenides Commentary* are by the columns and lines of Cousin's edition, and those from the *De Providentia* follow the paragraphs and lines of Boese.

(b) MODERN WORKS: Full titles of modern works are only given on their first occurrence in the main text or footnotes. Thereafter, they are simply cited by the author's name and the date of publication (e.g. *Trouillard* 1971), except in cases where there are several publications from the same year. For full details of all modern works cf. BIBLIOGRAPHY p. 136.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study is that of spiritual motion in the philosophy of Proclus. The adjective 'spiritual' has been employed in order to distinguish the type of motion under discussion from the sensible or physical variety. Exactly what the implications of the contrast between the two orders of motion are will be discussed later. For the time being, we need only say that spiritual motion is that form of motion which Proclus attributes to the entities within his system which form the content of the spiritual world, that is to say (in ascending order of importance) intellects, lives, beings, henads, and finally at the head of this hierarchy the First Infinity, and the First Limit. The One is excluded from this survey, for it transcends every category which will be employed in the discussions. At the other end of the scale, souls are also excluded, for with these a new factor emerges, that of their activity in time, which would take the present study beyond the available limits. Proclus, like Plato before him, has as a fundamental postulate of his philosophy a twofold division into the sensible and the intelligible. For the Neoplatonists, motion can take place in either realm, and it is the present aim to consider its operation in the latter.¹

At this stage, one may justifiably be tempted to pose two questions. In the first place, why should spiritual motion be chosen as a subject? The field of Neoplatonism is a large one, and it has never been studied in depth as have earlier periods of ancient thought. Why then should time be spent on the minute analysis of a specific problem, when wider and more general surveys are still much needed? In the second place, why should this particular subject be studied in the writings of Proclus, a representative of the last

¹ Throughout the argument, I shall employ the expression 'spiritual motion' rather than 'intelligible motion' (as one might be led to expect in view of traditional Platonic terminology) to contrast with 'sensible motion'. The reason for this substitution is that in the case of Proclus, the term 'intelligible' (νοητός) normally applies to a smaller part of reality than in some other Neoplatonic writings. For Proclus, the term is restricted to the hypostasis of Being and should not, strictly speaking, be applied to those of Life and Intellect. Although he occasionally gives it the wider meaning when explaining specific texts of Plato, it is perhaps best for the interpreter to employ some other term in connection with supra-sensible reality as a whole.

school of Neoplatonism, and a less well-known thinker than his predecessor Plotinus? Would not a more general survey be especially welcome in his case?

The answer to the first question lies partly in the fact that spiritual motion is in a sense the pivot upon which the whole Neoplatonic system revolves, and is crucial to the understanding of every philosopher between Plotinus and Damascius (and indeed of some earlier and many later thinkers). It is the highest form of motion and the model on which the motion of the sensible world is patterned. It is the highest form of causation, in which spiritual entities exercise their causal function not by conscious thought, but by spontaneous and unwilled creativity. Thus, in the interpretation of the Neoplatonists, the Platonic Demiurge is not a reasoning creator, but becomes instead a source of emanative power at the head of a causal process. In the system of Plotinus, the first stage in this process and the paradigm for the next is the motion of Intellect, for once Intellect has reached its complete form, it begins to produce the next hypostasis, Soul, in its turn. In the later Neoplatonists, the whole process is more complicated, and the spiritual motion is subdivided into further stages.

Not only is the concept of spiritual motion so important in the structure of the Neoplatonic system as a whole, but it is also problematic. This has been demonstrated recently by Armstrong¹ who, although directing his attention specifically to Plotinus, raises questions which are of crucial importance for the understanding of all the Neoplatonists.

Armstrong draws attention to the apparently contradictory remarks which Plotinus frequently makes when he is describing the nature of Intellect² in his system. On the one hand, there are many passages which refer to the absolutely changeless character of this hypostasis, yet at the same time, other passages refer to it in terms which imply a temporal history, for it proceeds from and reverts upon the One, and it engages in self-contemplation. Speaking

¹ A. H. Armstrong: 'Eternity, Life and Movement in Plotinus' Accounts of ΝΟΥΣ', *Le Néoplatonisme* (report of the International Conference on Neoplatonism held at Royaumont, 9-13 June 1969), Paris 1971, pp. 67-74.

² Since Plotinus' hypostasis of Intellect is equivalent not only to Proclus' hypostasis of the same name, but also to the latter's hypostases of Being and Life, any problems arising in this connection will be reproduced and magnified for the later philosopher.

of the passages which deal with procession and reversion, he writes:¹ 'And I find it (perhaps because I have an obtuse and time-bound mind) impossible to translate this whole doctrine, which is certainly expressed in time-language, into non-durational terms. It seems to imply that Intellect has a history of at least two episodes, and that something happens to it, when it should have no history and nothing should happen to it at all.' He finds a similar problem in the passages which deal with self-contemplation, for he continues:² 'But it seems to me that he has in these passages irrevocably introduced into his account of the eternal life of Intellect the idea of intellectual travel and exploration, and so of duration and succession.' From all this, he concludes that Plotinus' account of the nature of this hypostasis is inconsistent, because he is attempting to combine too much both in terms of philosophical ideas derived from the tradition before him, and in terms of those derived from his own experience.

The concept of spiritual motion in fact represents one of the most syncretistic of all the aspects of Neoplatonic doctrine (which is undoubtedly one of the principal reasons for its extreme difficulty), and it embraces not only Platonic and Aristotelian, but also Stoic elements. These influences have been carefully identified and examined by Hadot,³ but perhaps they should be noted very briefly.

Plato's celebrated discussion of the nature of Being and of the so-called μέγιστα γένη inspired the analysis of the spiritual world pursued at such length by the Neoplatonists. Plato had associated Being with Life and Intelligence, and this authority was sufficient to link the three concepts together more or less permanently in the minds of Plotinus and his successors. There may have been arguments about the extent to which these were merely logically distinguishable aspects of one hypostasis or else separate hypostases,

¹ Armstrong, *op. cit.* p. 71.

² Armstrong, *op. cit.* p. 73.

³ P. Hadot: 'Être, Vie, Pensée chez Plotin et avant Plotin', *Entretiens Hardt* 5, Vandoeuvres-Genève 1960, pp. 105-141. This important article, to which I am indebted throughout the following summary, traces the various influences on Plotinus' formulation of the theory of Intellect. Hadot discusses not only the obvious debts to Plato and Aristotle (acknowledged, of course, by Plotinus himself), but also the influence of certain syncretistic material which (he argues) formed the content of various manuals of philosophical learning in use in the schools at that period.

but no philosopher in the Platonic tradition doubted the inseparable connection between the three elements in this triad.¹ Again, Plato had associated Being with, in the first place, Rest and Motion, and in the second place, Sameness and Difference, and these five became for the Neoplatonists the 'categories' of the spiritual world.² These terms were also interpreted in different ways by various philosophers within the school, but nobody doubted the general applicability of the five, or their relationship to one another.

Plato, however, had only shown which concepts were to be related, and had failed to provide the philosophical means by which such a relation could be effectively brought about. The Aristotelian concept of ἐνέργεια, particularly as used in the theology, provided just such a means,³ for when applied to the supreme divinity it united Being and Intelligence, the union itself being described as the highest Life. Undoubtedly the Neoplatonists (anxious as always to vindicate the authority of Plato) would have claimed that there was nothing in the Aristotelian concept of Activity which was not already in the Platonic concept of Motion (that is to say, the antithesis of Rest as mentioned earlier), and this is probably the main reason for the confusion of the two terms which is so common in the writings of Plotinus.

The third stage in the philosophical synthesis was the combination of these Platonic and Aristotelian elements with ideas derived from Stoic sources. The Aristotelian notion of Activity produced a dynamic interpretation of Being which went a considerable way towards providing the Neoplatonists with a philosophical basis for their notion of spiritual Life, but not far enough. In fact, they required something more elaborate, and they found what they needed in the Stoic idea of the motion constituting the πνεῦμα. Hadot⁴ has summarized the relationship between the Neoplatonic concept of Life and the Stoic theory succinctly as follows: 'Elle correspond à une transposition platonicienne, c'est-à-dire à une élévation au plan métaphysique de la conception stoïcienne du mouvement alternatif constitutif de l'être, mouvement appelé par les stoïciens *τονική κίνησις*.' Aristotle had merely shown how Motion (that is to say, the Platonic category combined with the

¹ Plato, *Sophist* 248e.

² Plato, *Sophist* 254c-255e.

³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Λ7, 1072b 26-28.

⁴ Hadot, op. cit. p. 135.

Aristotelian notion of Activity) could be present in the spiritual world, and the essence of his Activity was its uniformity. The Stoic concept, on the other hand, has an implicit duality, and by applying it to the spiritual world, the Neoplatonists felt that they could accommodate more complex varieties of motion within it. What form these more complex varieties took will be explained later in this study, but for the present we should note that the decidedly physical flavour of much of the Neoplatonic speculation about the spiritual world, and indeed of the concept of spiritual motion itself, is a result of the transposition of the Stoic physics into the metaphysical sphere.

So much, then, can be said to justify an examination in detail of the concept of spiritual motion in Neoplatonism. However, there was a second question raised at the beginning which also requires an answer. Why should the present study choose to consider the problem specifically from the standpoint of Proclus?

Perhaps this may be answered by saying that Proclus shows by the reasoned and deductive form of his discussions of the question, and by the regularity with which he returns to it throughout his writings, that he was above all attempting to provide a rational explanation of the presence of motion within the spiritual world. The structure of a treatise such as the important *Elements of Theology*, consisting of a series of interrelated propositions about higher reality, shows this approach most clearly, and many of Proclus' other writings contain equally careful argumentation. There seems to be no question of a purely religious or mystical affirmation of inherently contradictory ideas, but at all times such ideas must be brought within the realm of strict logic, or at least within the realm of logic as conceived by a Neoplatonic philosopher of the period. Proclus' writings, therefore, provide us with the most carefully reasoned discussions of the problem of spiritual motion which we possess, a fact which makes an examination of the topic from his viewpoint especially worth while.

At this stage, a brief summary of the argument to follow may be of assistance. The special nature of the evidence requires that the discussion should be essentially a deductive process rather than an accumulation of information as an end in itself, and so some pointers to the main lines of development may be useful. The reasons for the choice of this particular order of topics will, I hope, also become clear.

First of all, the problem of spiritual motion is stated in the most simple and paradoxical form in which it appears in Proclus' writings. This discussion occupies the first half of Chapter I. After this, we move on to examining the concept of spiritual motion in considerable detail, and this begins in the latter half of Chapter I and continues until the end of the study. This argument is subdivided, however, into several distinct phases, the first of these yielding the important notion of logical relation and occupying the latter half of Chapter I, the second being devoted to a detailed analysis of the different forms in which motion manifests itself in Proclus' system and continuing throughout the next three chapters, while the third returns to the question of logical relation and shows the various precisions of the basic idea which he makes, this last occupying the first half of Chapter V. In the second half of this chapter, some possible objections to the proposed interpretation are considered and answered, and the whole discussion concludes with a brief summary of some of the most significant features of Proclus' theory. His doctrine of spiritual motion is compared with ideas on the same subject held by other philosophers, especially by Plotinus, and his probable contribution to the development of the subject is briefly assessed. In the course of the main argument, certain subordinate aspects of the theory of spiritual motion are revealed, and the discussion of these is removed from the main text to appendices.

CHAPTER ONE

MOTION I

(a) *The problem of spiritual motion*

One of the most interesting metaphysical doctrines of Proclus is his theory that there are certain entities which are αὐθυπόστατα, a term which we may translate 'self-constituted'. The nature of these is expounded at considerable length in the texts, and we may perhaps best begin our researches into spiritual motion by making a brief outline of the theory.

The most important point to note is that the self-constituted are both atemporal and non-spatial. The complete doctrine can be extracted from four propositions in the *Elements of Theology*. Speaking of the atemporal aspect of these entities, Proclus writes (*El. Th.* 50. 1-2): πᾶν τὸ αὐθυπόστατον ἐξήρηται τῶν ὑπὸ χρόνου μετρουμένων κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν.¹ The non-spatial aspect is shown by combining the following propositions: (i) (*El. Th.* 44. 11) πᾶν τὸ αὐθυπόστατον πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐστὶν ἐπιστρεπτικόν, (ii) (*El. Th.* 76. 22-3) πᾶν ἄσώματον, πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐπιστρεπτικὸν ὄν, ὑπ' ἄλλων μετεχόμενον χωριστῶς μετέχεται, and (iii) (*El. Th.* 86. 27) πᾶν αἴτιον χωριστὸν πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ἅμα καὶ οὐδαμοῦ.²

The postulation of atemporal and non-spatial realities was, of course, absolutely fundamental for Platonists, and went without saying in most cases.³ Normally, Proclus is content to speak of the

¹ The addition of the words κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν to the formula is presumably to allow Soul to be included in the category of the self-constituted. Soul performs the role of an intermediary between the sensible and spiritual worlds, and to enable it to do so, Proclus makes it atemporal and temporal at the same time. Its atemporal aspect is its existence, while its temporal aspect is its capacity to engage in discursive reasoning, cf. *El. Th.* 166, 27.

² To draw conclusions by coupling propositions from different parts of the *Elements of Theology* together is very much in the spirit of the work itself, which is cast in the form of a series of interrelated propositions, proofs, and corollaries. The nature of the method of reasoning as a whole, and particularly of the relationship between propositions, has been carefully examined by A. Charles: 'La raison et le divin chez Proclus', *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53, 1969, pp. 460-468.

³ The only passage I can find in Proclus' works in which there is an explicit linking of the concepts of atemporality and non-spatiality to describe the nature of spiritual realities in general is *Prov.* 10. 10-11. Such a description

self-constituted as 'eternal' (αἰώνια), that is to say emphasizing the atemporal aspect alone.¹ We find a typical description in the *Timaeus Commentary*, and this passage is particularly interesting in that it gives a complete classification of reality in terms of time² (*in Tim.* I. 255. 29ff.): λέγω δὴ πρῶτως αἰεὶ ὄν εἶναι τὸ αἰώνιον ὑπάρχον κατὰ πάντα, τὴν οὐσίαν, τὴν δύναμιν, τὴν ἐνέργειαν, γενητὸν δὲ ἀπλῶς τὸ ἐν χρόνῳ τὴν τε οὐσίαν ὑποδεχόμενον καὶ τὴν δύναμιν πᾶσαν καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν· δεῖ γὰρ τὸ μὲν ὅλον εἶναι αἰώνιον, τὸ δὲ ὅλον ἔγχρονον, καὶ τὸ μὲν αὐθυποστάτως ὁμοῦ πᾶν ὑφεστάναι, τὸ δὲ ἀλλαχόθεν ἡρτημένην ἔχειν τὴν ἐν τῇ παρατάσει ὑπόστασιν. τούτων δὲ ἄκρων ὄντων εἶναι καὶ τὰ μέσα, τὰ πῇ μὲν τῆς τοῦ ὄντος μετειληφότα μοίρας, πῇ δὲ κοινωνοῦντα γενέσεως. εἶναι δὲ αὖ καὶ τὰ μηδετέρου τούτων μετέχοντα, τὸ μὲν κατὰ τὸ κρεῖσσον, τὸ δὲ κατὰ τὸ χεῖρον· καὶ γὰρ ἡ ὕλη οὔτε ὄν ἐστίν οὔτε γενητόν — οὔτε γὰρ νοήσει περιληπτὸν οὔτε αἰσθητόν — καὶ τὸ ἐν, ὡς ἀμφοτέρωθεν δείκνυσιν ὁ Παρμενίδης. The self-constituted have their existence, power, and activity in eternity, while those which 'depend upon others' (not self-constituted) have these in time. Other entities³ mediate between these, and the One

applied to the Forms is not, however, uncommon, cf. *in Parm.* 861. 12-16, and *ibid.* 873. 11-20. In these passages, Proclus must explain this fundamental assumption to enable him to solve the problems about the participation of the Forms which Parmenides raises. We may, of course, add that since Intellect comprises for Proclus a plenitude of Forms, then the hypostasis itself is by implication atemporal and non-spatial.

¹ When Proclus uses the term αἰώνιος, he does not mean 'existing for the whole of time' but 'transcending time'. This distinction is made perfectly clear in numerous passages, cf. *in Tim.* I. 278. 9-10, *ibid.* II. 147. 29-32, *ibid.* III. 3. 8-9, *in Alcib.* 4. 7-9. It is often used to explain how the World is everlasting, but that it does not, of course, transcend time. This quality is reserved for αὐθυπόστατα.

² For discussions of Proclus' theory of time which assemble the main texts cf. A. Levi: 'Il concetto del tempo nelle filosofie dell'età romana', *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* 7, 1952, pp. 173-200; W. O'Neill: 'Time and Eternity in Proclus', *Phronesis* 7, 1962, pp. 161-5; S. Sambursky: 'The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism', *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 2, 1968, pp. 153-167 which was later incorporated in S. Sambursky and S. Pines: *The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism*, Texts with Translation, Introduction and Notes, Jerusalem 1971.

³ These include Nature, which is in different senses both something which has come to be and something which is everlasting, and apparently Soul. Perhaps there is a slight inconsistency, for here Proclus seems to imply that this middle group falls between the self-constituted and the not self-constituted, whereas it is a normal part of his doctrine that Soul is self-constituted. Perhaps we see the beginning of yet a further subdivision in which Soul is partly self-constituted and partly determined by Intellect.

and Matter fall outside the classification altogether being above and below the other groups respectively.¹

So much is clear. However, the doctrine becomes a little more problematical when we move on to consider exactly what we are to understand as being included in this general category. In other words, how does the usual stratification of reality into hypostases fit in with the new classification presented in these passages into self-constituted and otherwise? The texts which we have seen so far do not provide us with a complete answer, for these entities were discussed largely in the abstract. We must therefore look elsewhere.

Dodds² has pointed out that Proclus assumes the identification of the self-constituted with those principles which are termed 'self-sufficient' (αὐτάρχεις) in the *Platonic Theology*. In the first book, Proclus enters into a lengthy classification of the general properties of the gods, and eventually comes to consider the question of their self-sufficiency. The gods, we are told, embody this characteristic to the highest degree, whereas other spiritual entities (lower in the hierarchy of reality) possess this quality to a lesser degree and in various different ways.³ The introduction of degrees of self-sufficiency increases the difficulties of interpretation considerably, but Dodds is probably correct in seeing this theory as the key to the doctrine of the self-constituted as expounded in the earlier passages. On this interpretation, they are to be understood simply as the contents of the spiritual world.⁴

These spiritual realities are therefore beyond time and space, and it would be reasonable to suppose that, since motion requires both these categories as its essential basis or at the very least the first, Proclus would view them as being immobile. Indeed,

¹ According to Proclus' strict principles, it is possible that not all of the self-constituted should be described as 'eternal', for he distinguishes a level of reality which is technically προαιώνιος, cf. *Th. Pl.* 160. Speaking loosely, however, the self-constituted are everlasting.

² E. R. Dodds, *Proclus, The Elements of Theology*, a Revised Text with Translation, Introduction and Commentary, Second Edition, Oxford 1963.

³ At *Th. Pl.* 50, Proclus says that Intellect is self-sufficient κατὰ μέθεξιν, Soul κατ' ἔλλαμψιν, and the World κατὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ὁμοιότητα, while only the gods are self-sufficient in themselves. On the problems of this relative self-sufficiency cf. A. C. Lloyd: 'The Later Neoplatonists', *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, edited by A. H. Armstrong. Cambridge 1967, pp. 308-309.

⁴ Dodds, op. cit. pp. 196 and 224.

the classification of principles in terms of motion or its absence which we find in the *Elements of Theology* seems at first sight to bear this notion out.¹

Proclus divides reality first of all into two categories, but then goes on to subdivide the latter, the result being that *ὄντα* fall into three groups depending upon whether they are unmoved or moved, and (in the case of the latter) whether the motive force is internal or external in origin. The passage runs as follows (*El. Th.* 16. 9-12): *πᾶν τὸ ὄν ἢ ἀκίνητόν ἐστιν ἢ κινούμενον· καὶ εἰ κινούμενον, ἢ ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἢ ὑπ' ἄλλου· καὶ εἰ μὲν ὑφ' ἑαυτοῦ, αὐτοκίνητόν ἐστιν· εἰ δὲ ὑπ' ἄλλου, ἑτεροκίνητον. πᾶν ἄρα ἢ ἀκίνητόν ἐστιν ἢ αὐτοκίνητον ἢ ἑτεροκίνητον.* Exactly which principles are intended to fall under these headings is explained by a later proposition (*El. Th.* 22. 4ff.) which informs us that Intellect is *ἀκίνητος*, Soul *κινουμένη ὑφ' ἑαυτῆς δευτέραν ἔχει τάξιν τῆς ἀκινήτου φύσεως*, and finally Body is *ὑφ' ἑτέρου κινήτόν*. It is the first of these three categories which interests us in the present context, for when Proclus marks off the immobile from the other groups, he must intend this property to belong to the spiritual realm from the level of Intellect upwards. In this case, the category of the immobile will correspond broadly with the earlier category of the self-constituted.²

It is here that we are faced with a real problem, for Proclus appears in many contexts to associate motion with the immobile group. This motion is of two varieties, the first being a type of motion which one principle exhibits in relation to its prior, the second being a type of motion which it performs in relation to itself. We must examine these two forms of motion very briefly.³

The first type of motion, which is directed externally, appears in certain general propositions which Proclus formulates about causation. In these propositions, he is clearly referring to the self-constituted, for these (as comprising the content of the spiritual

¹ There is a more extensive classification of reality in terms of motion at *Th. Pl.* 51, to which we shall return later on. The simpler classification will form the basis of our present discussion, for it has the advantage of showing more clearly the simple contrast between the immobile and the mobile with which we are concerned.

² With, of course, the one exception that Soul is self-constituted and self-moving, i.e. not immobile.

³ For the time being, we need not elaborate the distinction between the two varieties of motion too much. Our problem is the reconciliation of motion and immobility, and this applies equally in either case.

world) are the causes *par excellence*. The process of causation involves three stages, for (*El. Th.* 38. 9-10) πᾶν τὸ αἰτιατὸν καὶ μένει ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ αἰτίᾳ καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτήν. Furthermore, the whole process is described as one in which (*El. Th.* 36. 11-12) πᾶν τὸ προῖδὸν ἀπὸ τινος καὶ ἐπιστρέφον κυκλικὴν ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν. The exact interpretation of these ideas will form the basis of a more extensive discussion later in this study, but at this point we should simply note the contrast between the obvious dynamism of these propositions and the immobile character of the self-constituted which has already been observed.

These last two propositions dealt with the motion which one principle undergoes in relation to its prior, but Proclus also speaks of the motion which it performs in relation to itself. This type of motion is explicitly attributed to the self-constituted which are (as pointed out at the beginning of the chapter) πρὸς ἑαυτὰ ἐπιστρεπτικά. We are not given very much information to allow us to form a more precise picture of this latter type of motion, but Proclus generally speaks of it in the same terms as when he is discussing the more readily comprehensible externally directed motion.

What is of really crucial significance is that the process which forms the subject of these propositions is explicitly described by Proclus as being a form of motion, for he adds (*El. Th.* 36. 13-15): εἰ γάρ, ἀφ' οὗ πρόεισιν, εἰς τοῦτο ἐπιστρέφει, συνάπτει τῇ ἀρχῇ τὸ τέλος, καὶ ἔστι μία καὶ συνεχὴς ἡ κίνησις, τῆς μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ μένοντος, τῆς δὲ πρὸς τὸ μεῖναν γινομένης. However, the principles which undergo this process have already been declared to be immobile.

(b) *History of Interpretation*

It is now advisable to make a brief survey of the previous interpretations of this 'motion of immobility'.¹ Most earlier writers agree that the motion which is a fundamental characteristic of atemporal and non-spatial reality can only be understood as some type of logical relation. However, this concept of logical relation must be weighed carefully since it appears in two different forms which we may call 'static logical relation' and 'dynamic

¹ I shall take these accounts in chronological order, without suggesting that they necessarily add progressively greater clarification of the issues involved.

logical relation' respectively. The former notion signifies that the spiritual world is a fact, and it must be distinguished carefully from the latter notion which shows that the spiritual world is a process. Some writers have not been careful to draw this distinction, and speak loosely of 'logical relation'. However, it is only the dynamic form of this concept which can explain Proclus' spiritual motion, if we are to take his accounts literally.

The first interpretation which we must consider is that of Lindsay.¹ In a stimulating account of the main features of Proclus' metaphysical system, Lindsay has occasion to consider the nature of the causal process which we were discussing at the end of the last section. He warns us that 'quoiqu'il y ait un ordre de causalité et que l'on parle fréquemment de l'antérieur et du postérieur, les successions sont logiques, plutôt qu'historiques ou chronologiques'.² We must not, he argues, be misled by Proclus' language into thinking that there is any prior or posterior in a chronological sense in the spiritual world, for he is of necessity employing the language of metaphor. It is a pity that the writer did not go on to explain exactly what he meant by 'successions logiques', but fortunately the next interpreter provides us with some guide-lines.

The idea of logical relation is taken up by Rosán³ who, however, evolves a much more elaborate theory. In this interpretation, which has been fairly influential in recent times, each stage in the causal process is analysed into logical terms, and ingeniously so. We shall therefore examine this view at somewhat greater length.

Rosán discusses the fundamental assumptions behind Proclus' system very much in the abstract. These determine the nature of both the sensible and spiritual worlds, but the author shows us that he is mainly concerned with their function in connection with the latter. This is, of course, the area that we are considering in our present analysis.

¹ J. Lindsay: 'Le système de Proclus', *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 28, 1921, pp. 497-523.

² Lindsay, op. cit. pp. 506-507.

³ L. J. Rosán: *The Philosophy of Proclus*, the Final Phase of Ancient Thought, New York 1949. Rosán speaks loosely of 'logical relation' throughout his account, but he is clearly making an advance in laying considerable emphasis on the dynamic aspect. Perhaps the main weakness of his version is the tendency to polarize the logical and static on the one hand and the ontological and dynamic on the other. The concept of 'dynamic logical relation' refuses such a sharp dichotomy.

The causal relation between each principle and its prior forms the starting-point for this interpretation, and he makes it quite clear that 'we are primarily speaking of eternal relationships and not of causation within time'.¹ Rosán then goes on to explain what he means us to understand by this causal relation, and it appears to contain two aspects which he describes as follows: 'In the first place, we can affirm that it may be expressed by a logical implication; if the existence of a mind-possessed-by-a-soul implies the existence of a soul-possessing-a-mind, then the mind-possessed-by-a-soul will be the 'cause' of the soul-possessing-a-mind, which in turn will be its 'effect'. On the other hand, since a soul-possessing-a-mind also implies a mind-possessed-by-a-soul, logical implication alone cannot be the only factor that constitutes a relationship for Proclus. But if we add to this the fact that the mind-possessed-by-a-soul gives *power* to the soul-possessing-a-mind, but does not receive any power from it in return, we have completed the picture. For if relationship were only a *logical* matter, there would indeed be no way to distinguish a cause from its effect, since everything that implied something else could be implied by it in the reverse order. But when we add an *ontological* principle—the transmission of power from one thing to another—we establish an irreversible direction, namely, the hierarchy of power mentioned above'.² Rosán continues by emphasizing the closeness of the connection between these two factors, and adds that 'everything that exists must and has the power to be related to something else. The only fundamental kind of relationship there is, however, is that transference of power from one thing to another which may be expressed by a logical implication'.³

This scheme is applied to the interpretation of the whole causal process or *ἐνέργεια κυκλική* which we considered in the last section with interesting results, the most significant of which is that the idea of the return of the effect to its cause (perhaps the most dynamic concept in the philosophy of Proclus) is viewed as being 'essentially the logical connection between the cause and its effect but viewed from the opposite direction'.⁴

¹ Rosán, op. cit. ch. iv, n. 15.

² Rosán, op. cit. p. 69.

³ Rosán, op. cit. p. 69.

⁴ Rosán, op. cit. p. 74.

Some of the later accounts stress an idea very closely linked with the notion of logical relation, namely the concept of dialectic. For example, Von Ivánka¹ writes that the later Neoplatonism, as represented by Proclus, in attempting to analyse the logical structure of reality through reflection upon the nature of mind itself, proves to be the true heir of the ancient Academic tradition. 'Dort soll (besonders seit I. Stenzel's Arbeiten ist es klar geworden, wie wichtig dieses Element für die platonische Altersphilosophie ist) aus gewissen letzten, beinahe mathematisch exakten Elementen das All der *Ideen*, mit genauer Nachvollziehung der diaireseis, geistig herausentwickelt und sozusagen konstruiert werden, so dass jeder geistige Inhalt durch seinen Platz in diesem System, und durch die Schritte, die man vom Begriff des ungeteilten Seins, über Teilung nach Teilung zu ihm hin machen musste, restlos determiniert ist; hier soll dieselbe deduktive Methode auf die ganze Weite der Polarität angewendet werden, die das oberste, unennbare, unbegreifbare Eine, dessen Unendlichkeit erst durch Plotins Mystik ganz erschlossen worden war (bei Platon war noch das 'Eine' schlechthin 'peras' gewesen) von den endlichen, veränderlichen konkreten Wesenheiten dieser Welt trennt. Das Ganze *will* ein Versuch sein, den Hervorgang des Endlichen aus dem Unendlichen (und zwar als stufenmässigen Hervorgang) denkend zu *verstehen*'.² This interpretation throughout emphasizes a conception of Proclus' system in which the content of the spiritual world and the method of philosophical inquiry are united.

The interpretation of Beutler³ contains similar ideas, for this writer speaks of the aim of the metaphysical system of Proclus 'den erkannten Stufenweg dieses Prozesses aus philosophischen Einsichten auch in seiner Stufenzahl festzulegen, gleichsam in einem geistigen Nachkonstruieren also'.⁴ This interpretation need not be considered at length here, for it is largely a summary of

¹ E. von Ivánka: "'Teilhaben'", "Hervorgang" und "Hierarchie" bei Pseudo-Dionysios und bei Proklos (Der "Neuplatonismus" des Pseudo-Dionysios), *Actes du XIème Congrès International de Philosophie* 12, 1953, pp. 153-158. By speaking of dialectic, Von Ivánka indirectly emphasizes the dynamic aspect, since dialectic is a process of deduction. His account also introduces an epistemological element which must soon occupy our attention.

² Von Ivánka, op. cit. p. 155.

³ R. Beutler: 'Proklos', *Paulys Realencyclopädie der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Halbband 45, Stuttgart 1957, col. 186-247.

⁴ Beutler, op. cit. col. 210.

earlier views. The causal process itself is conceived in essentially logical terms, the return of the effect upon the cause, for example, being described as 'dialektisch ja nichts anderes als die logische Verbindung von Ursache und Bewirktem, nur eben nicht von der Ursache sondern vom Bewirkten aus gesehen'.¹

The treatment of the idea of an effect returning upon its cause as a variety of logical relation appears again in the version of Grondijs.² The relation between one principle and its prior is categorized as a type of 'présence logique',³ and in the specific case of the third stage of the causal process, he writes: 'Chaque procession suppose la régression — logiquement parler — consécutive des êtres procédés vers le principe supérieur'.⁴ This interpretation seems to be very much in the tradition of the earlier accounts.

The opinions of these scholars may be considered as fairly representative of the type of interpretation which has been most widely favoured in the past. Each of the five writers selected has interpreted the spiritual motion along the same general lines, although it is fair to say that they have not cared to examine the philosophical implications of this type of interpretation. To what extent these endeavours to explain a puzzling aspect of Proclus' philosophy have been successful is a question which we must leave open until later, when the causal mechanism itself has been understood more precisely. In that context, we shall return to the basic problem and consider perhaps the most convincing of all the versions of the 'logical interpretation' in a careful analysis. This interpretation⁵ is also the most recently published, and it will provide us with a firm basis on which to judge the validity of this type of explanation in general.

At this point we must return to the distinction between the static and the dynamic types of logical relation, for if Proclus understands spiritual motion in the latter form, he must accept its implicit epistemological basis. To maintain that reality consists of a network of static logical relations does not, of course, presuppose

¹ Beutler, op. cit. col. 212.

² L. H. Grondijs: 'L'âme, le nous et les hénades dans la théologie de Proclus', *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Afd. Letterkunde 23, 2, 1960, pp. 29-42.

³ Grondijs, op. cit. p. 29.

⁴ Grondijs, op. cit. p. 31.

⁵ That of Beierwaltes.

any specific conception of the relationship between mind and object. However, to suppose that reality consists of a system of dynamic logical relations requires that there be some interdependence between mind and object. In the former case, reality constitutes a fact which can be treated at one extreme as non-mental and at the other as mental as well as at various theoretically intermediate points between these. In the latter case, reality constitutes a process involving *motion of thought* from one object to another, i.e. it must be to some degree at least mental.

Our most immediate task is to examine the texts and to attempt to discover if there is any real evidence for such a philosophical doctrine in the writings of Proclus. This investigation will make it necessary to examine a number of important passages in great detail. Unfortunately, without going through this admittedly lengthy procedure very carefully, it would be quite impossible to answer this crucial question.

(c) *The relation of mind and object in the philosophy of Proclus*

The problem of the relationship between mind and object in the metaphysical system of Proclus is an extremely difficult one, for there appear to be a large number of different minds and different objects at various levels of the hierarchy of spiritual reality. Moreover these minds and objects behave in a number of different ways. In the *Timaeus Commentary*,¹ we find a hierarchy of no less than six different types of νόησις, of which the first three are termed δολικαὶ νοήσεις, and are elevated above human cognition, while the others belong to partial intellect, rational soul, and imagination respectively. We are not told which entities we should associate with these three higher modes of intellection, but Festugière² is probably correct in assuming that the phraseology of the passage implies that they are to be linked with the hypostases of Being, Life, and Intellect respectively. We may perhaps add that, although this classification appears to be the main one in Proclus' writings, there are nevertheless several others which are based on totally different principles to which we must ultimately

¹ in *Tim.* I. 243. 26ff.

² A. J. Festugière: *Proclus, Commentaire sur le Timée*, traduction et notes, vol. 2, Paris 1967, p. 78, n. 3. A somewhat ambiguous note.

attempt to relate it.¹ The consideration of the relationships which hold between these various descriptions would undoubtedly require another study on the same scale as the present one devoted alone to the problem, but for our present purposes there is little doubt that it is the *ὀλικάι νοήσεις* with which we are primarily concerned. These seem to represent the mode of intellection most properly associated with the spiritual world.

Proclus appears himself to throw light on the meaning of this concept in two contexts, first in his descriptions of the relationship between the hypostases of Intellect and Being, and secondly in his discussions of the relationship between the *δημιουργός* and the *παράδειγμα*. We should consider both of these accounts very carefully, and try to see exactly what form the relationship between mind and object takes in either case.

Our first problem, therefore, is the question of the relationship between Intellect and Being in the hierarchy of hypostases. In this scheme, these hypostases are separated by that of Life, and so we must analyse carefully the interrelations within this whole triad. On the interpretation to be proposed, this triad emerges as a complex plurality within unity which comprises the basic content of the spiritual world.²

The starting-point of our analysis will be a proposition from the *Elements of Theology* coupled with its proof, the form being that of the enunciation of a general principle which is then applied in a specific case. The passage, almost every line of which is of fundamental importance, runs as follows (*El. Th.* 92. 13-29): *πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, οἰκείως δὲ ἐν ἐκάστω· καὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ὁ νοῦς, καὶ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ νοεῖν, καὶ ἐν τῷ νῷ τὸ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλ' ὅπου μὲν νοεῖς, ὅπου δὲ ζωτικῶς, ὅπου δὲ ὄντως ὄντα πάντα. ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἕκαστον ἢ κατ' αἰτίαν ἔστιν ἢ καθ' ὑπαρξιν ἢ*

¹ Cf. *in Parm.* 900. 18-33, where three types of intelligible object are distinguished, *κατὰ μέθεξιν*, *καθ' ὑπαρξιν*, and *κατ' αἰτίαν*. At *in Alcib.* 65. 8ff. intellects can be *ἀμέθεκτος*, *μεθεκτός*, or *ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἐγγινόμενος*, this passage being part of a commentary on the quotation from the *Chaldaean Oracles*: *ὁς ἐκ νόου ἐκθορε πρῶτος ἐσσάμενος πυρὶ πῦρ συνδέσμιον* (*Kroll* p. 25).

² In the following discussion of the structure of the spiritual world, I shall employ various terms to describe the units which compose the triads. Sometimes they will be termed 'entities', and sometimes 'stages', for it is Proclus' doctrine that an entity is from a certain point of view a stage in a process. In contexts where it is necessary to avoid either of these specific determinations, I have substituted 'subdivisions', 'elements', or even 'terms' as appropriate.

κατὰ μέθεξιν, ἐν τε τῷ πρώτῳ τὰ λοιπὰ κατ' αἰτίαν ἔστι, καὶ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον κατὰ μέθεξιν τὸ δὲ τρίτον κατ' αἰτίαν, καὶ ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ τὰ πρὸ αὐτοῦ κατὰ μέθεξιν, καὶ ἐν τῷ ὄντι ἄρα ζωὴ προείληπται καὶ νοῦς, ἐκάστου δὲ κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρξιν χαρακτηριζομένου καὶ οὕτε κατὰ τὴν αἰτίαν (ἄλλων γὰρ ἔστιν αἴτιον) οὕτε κατὰ τὴν μέθεξιν (ἄλλα-χόθεν γὰρ ἔχει τοῦτο, οὗ μετείληφεν), ὅντως ἔστιν ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ ζῆν καὶ τὸ νοεῖν, ζωὴ οὐσιώδης καὶ νοῦς οὐσιώδης· καὶ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ κατὰ μέθεξιν μὲν τὸ εἶναι, κατ' αἰτίαν δὲ τὸ νοεῖν, ἀλλὰ ζωτικῶς ἐκότερον (κατὰ τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ ὑπαρξίς)· καὶ ἐν τῷ νῷ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ἡ οὐσία κατὰ μέθεξιν, καὶ νοερῶς ἐκότερον (καὶ γὰρ τὸ εἶναι τοῦ νοῦ γνωστικὸν καὶ ἡ ζωὴ γνῶσις). The interesting feature of this passage is that it emphasizes first, the unity of the three hypostases, secondly, the triadic structure of the configuration, and thirdly, the enneadic structure. The hypostases are a unity because each pervades the others, they form a triad because each predominates at a different point, and they are enneadic because each is analysable into a structure which mirrors the whole. Dodds has summed up the situation well in his note on this passage, for he writes: 'Are Being, Life, and Intelligence to be regarded as three aspects of a single reality or as three successive stages in the unfolding of the cosmos from the One? Proclus characteristically answers that both views are true: they are aspects, for each of them implies the others as cause or as consequent; they are successive, not coordinate, for each is predominant (though not to the exclusion of the others) at a certain stage of the πρόοδος'.¹

The whole matter becomes much more complicated when we turn to the *Platonic Theology*. Here, the analysis presented agrees in fundamentals with the account given above of the structure of the hypostases, but it reveals a more elaborate hierarchy. However, we should not consider this expanded analysis as in any way superseding or conflicting with the earlier one, but rather as being a further precision required by the different context of discussion.²

¹ Dodds, op. cit. p. 254.

² The more simplified subject-matter of the *Elements of Theology* does not suggest an earlier date for the work's composition, for the reduction of the content of the spiritual world to the most basic essentials could only be done when the whole doctrine was already fully formed. Cf. J. Trouillard: *Éléments de Théologie*, traduction, introduction et notes, Paris, 1965, p. 45.

As in the earlier account, triadic division proves to be the basic structural principle on which the organization of the spiritual world is based, but Proclus continually emphasizes the inherent unity. Thus in one passage (*Th. Pl.* 162) ἐκάστη τῶν τριάδων μονάς ἐστιν ἅμα καὶ τριάς.¹ Moreover this notion is supported with Platonic authority, for Proclus derives Eternity from a triad in his system while Plato had stated clearly that it 'remains in unity'. (*Th. Pl.* 168) τὴν μὲν τοίνυν πρῶτην τριάδα κρύφιον καὶ νοητὴν ἀκρότητα κληρωσαμένην ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς ποτὲ μὲν ὁ Πλάτων, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνώσεως ὀρμηθεὶς τῆς ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ τῆς ἐξηρημένης πρὸς τὰς ἄλλας ὑπερόχης, ἐν ἐπονομάζει καθάπερ ἐν τῷ Τιμαίῳ. Indeed, the combination of unity with triplicity becomes such a fundamental postulate that he comes to speak of (*Th. Pl.* 144) μονάδες τριαδικαί. This notion will prove to be of paramount importance in the coming analysis, and should be borne in mind.²

The triadic principle manifests itself in two basic forms: in the first place in that of πέρας, ἀπειρία and μικτόν, and in the second place in that of μονή, πρόοδος, and ἐπιστροφή.³ The fact that these are both reflections of the same principle rather than themselves separate principles leads to a certain degree of interchange between them in Proclus' exposition. However, the obvious differences, not the least of which is that the former is static while the latter is dynamic,⁴ mean that this interchange cannot always be complete. Nevertheless, there is an approximate congruence between the two triads, and for general purposes we may view them as equivalents. The usual mode of applying these principles is to say that in each successive triadic division, the first term is a manifestation of limit (or remaining), the second a manifestation of infinity (or procession),

¹ Exactly how Proclus is able to view these triads as unities will be a topic for discussion in Chapter III.

² Undoubtedly, the penchant for triadic structure was influenced by the *Chaldaean Oracles*. However, they probably only confirmed what was already dictated by philosophical needs. For the use of triads in traditional mythology cf. H. Usener: 'Dreiheit. Ein Versuch mythologischer Zahlenlehre', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 58, 1903, pp. 1-47, 161-208, and 321-362.

³ It can also manifest itself in a number of other forms, some of which will be considered in the relevant contexts later in the study.

⁴ It is, of course, the main purpose of the present analysis to show how a *rapprochement* between motion and immobility is achieved in Proclus' system.

and the third a manifestation of mixture (or reversion).¹ Thus, in a triad which is subdivided into three subordinate triads, as in the example given at the beginning of this section, there will be three occurrences of each of the terms, that is of course in addition to the occurrence in the original division. (*Th. Pl.* 144) καὶ γὰρ τὸ πέρας τριχῶς καὶ ἡ ἀπειρία καὶ τὸ μικτόν· ἄλλ' οὐ μὲν πάντα κατὰ τὸ πέρας, οὐ δὲ πάντα κατὰ τὸ ἀπειρον, οὐ δὲ πάντα κατὰ τὸ μικτόν. The triadic motif reappears at all levels in Proclus' spiritual hierarchy.

The first manifestation of this principle is in connection with ὄν, which was in traditional Neoplatonic theory the first entity to emerge posterior to the One.² This hypostasis is for Proclus a triplicity within unity, and therefore embraces the three elements of limit, infinity, and mixture within itself. This analysis explains the nature of Being, but it was clearly felt to be insufficient to explain the genesis of the hypostasis, and to achieve this, Proclus resorts to an elaborate theory in which the triad manifests itself on two different levels. In addition to the presence of limit, infinity, and mixture within the hypostasis, he distinguishes a higher triad which prefigures it, and so after the One is placed a supreme Limit and a supreme Infinity. The supreme mixture which results from these is identified with Being. (*Th. Pl.* 138-139) διττόν γὰρ τὸ πέρας καὶ τὸ ἀπειρον· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐξήρηται τῶν μικτῶν, τὰ δὲ εἰς τὴν συμπλήρωσιν αὐτῶν παρείληπται. δεῖ γὰρ (οἴμαι) πανταχοῦ πρὸ τῶν μεμιγμένων εἶναι τὰ ἄμικτα. It is logical enough within Proclus' own terms of reference.

The next triad in the spiritual world is that formed by the hypostases of ὄν, ζωή, and νοῦς. This is the group whose interrelation was considered at the beginning of the present section, and which forms the main division within the spiritual world according to

¹ On the importance of the triad πέρας, ἀπειρία, and μικτόν for the architecture of Proclus' spiritual world cf. J. Trouillard: 'La genèse de l'hylémorphisme selon Proclus', *Dialogue* 6, 1967, pp. 1-17, S. Sambursky: 'The Theory of Forms, a Problem and Four Neoplatonic Solutions', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 6, 1968, pp. 327-339, and W. Beierwaltes: 'Andersheit. Zur neuplatonischen Struktur einer Problemgeschichte', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Paris, 1971, pp. 365-372.

² On the relationship between the One and Being from a logical point of view cf. H. D. Saffrey: 'Aristote, Proclus, Bessarion: à propos de l'Un transcendantal', *Atti del XII Congresso Internazionale di Filosofia* 11 (Storia della filosofia antica e medievale), Florence 1960, pp. 153-158.

Proclus' conception.¹ He clearly shows its relationship to the basic principle of triadic development. (*Th. Pl.* 179) ἐξήρηται δὲ ἡ οὐσία τῶν λοιπῶν· μεσὴν δὲ ἔλαχεν ἡ ζωὴ τάξιν· τὸ δὲ πέρας τῆς τριάδος ταύτης ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν ὁ νοῦς. The division is on exactly the same lines as we saw earlier, but here the over-all unity of the three hypostases is emphasized to an even greater degree than in the earlier passage. Each entity, although independent, is a stage in the unfolding of a single process which reaches its completion in the reversion of the final element.

The main triad within the spiritual world is subdivided into three subordinate triads as in the description at the beginning of this section. Each of these subdivisions mirrors the structure of the main group, and so each of the main divisions has within itself an element each of being, life, and intellect. However, in the case of Being itself, the subordinate aspects of being, life, and intellect are all assimilated to the level of the intelligible, in the case of Life, they are assimilated to the vital, and in the case of Intellect, they are assimilated to the intellectual.² This increases the degree of continuity between the three main stages and in the development of the whole. (*Th. Pl.* 135) καὶ τὸ πρῶτως ὄν πάντων εἶναι νοητῶς περιληπτικὸν ἀπεδείκνυμεν, καὶ τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ τοῦ νοῦ· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ζωὴν τριαδικὴν εἶναι ζωτικῶς, καὶ τὸν νοῦν νοερῶς. So far, then, the structure appears to be very much as we should have expected.

¹ The nature of this triad and of its further subdivisions together with the history of its development in the doctrines of Porphyry, Iamblichus, 'Anonymus Taurinensis', and Proclus have been the subject of some fine studies by Hadot. Cf. P. Hadot (i) 'Fragments d'un commentaire de Porphyre sur le Parménide', *Revue des études grecques* 74, 1961, pp. 410-438, (ii) 'La métaphysique de Porphyre', *Entretiens Hardt* 12, Vandoeuvres-Genève 1966, pp. 127-157. Both of these articles later found their way into (iii) *Porphyre et Victorinus*, Paris 1968. Hadot deals admirably in these works with the question of the influence of the *Chaldaean Oracles* on the structure of the spiritual world from Porphyry onwards. On the importance of the *Chaldaean Oracles* for the formation of philosophical ideas at this period cf. also W. Theiler: *Die chaldäischen Orakel und die Hymnen des Synesios*, Halle (Saale) 1942. H. Lewy: *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy* (Recherches d'archéologie, de philologie et d'histoire 13), Cairo 1956 represents a noble (but not altogether successful) attempt to distinguish 'genuine' Chaldaean doctrine from the Chaldaean doctrines of Proclus and other Neoplatonists. E. R. Dodds: 'New Light on the "Chaldaean Oracles"', *Harvard Theological Review* 54, 1961, pp. 263-273 is a review of Lewy's book and provides a good critical guide to it.

² On the history of the subdivisions cf. n. 1.

The final triad which Proclus envisages as constituting the spiritual world, however, introduces a new factor since each of the triads described immediately above is subdivided into a further triad on the same lines, thus making, for example, nine elements within the hypostasis of Being.¹ In the case of the last two triadic divisions, the texts are sometimes a little confusing for the reader owing to the fact that approximately the same terminology for the three elements is used in both. The present grouping is fortunately much more sharply delineated from the others. (*Th. Pl.* 157) ὥστε τριττὰ μὲν εἶναι τὰ νοητὰ πέρατα, τριττὰς δὲ τὰς ἀπειρίας, τριττὰ δὲ τὰ μικτά. πάσης δὲ αὖ νοητῆς τριάδος τὸ μὲν πέρας ἐν ἐκάστη πατὴρ ἐπονομάζεται, τὸ δὲ ἄπειρον δύναμις, τὸ δὲ μικτὸν νοῦς. The use of the word νοητός shows us that in this passage we are discussing not a new terminology for one of the earlier triads, but a further subdivision within Being. The structure of the other hypostases is worked out on approximately analogous lines,² and there is no need for us to enter into the consideration of these lower divisions in the present context. One point must, however, be taken up before we move on from this topic, namely the exact meaning of the word πατήρ.

According to Proclus, this word applies only to divinity, a notion which is exceedingly common in his writings. Divinity is associated with a number of different entities, but most frequently it is to be found linked with the first elements in the last group of triads. We may, therefore, view such an apparently innocuous statement as (*Th. Pl.* 173) καὶ θεοὺς ἀνέφηγε πατέρας τῶν πάντων as being of considerable metaphysical significance. Since the first element in any triad is in a sense the cause of the existence of that triad as a whole, gods can be said to preside over all the stages in the evolution of the spiritual world, the result being that each of the main subdivisions within the spiritual world may be viewed as an order of gods.³ Thus the hypostasis of Being is

¹ On the history of the subdivisions cf. p. 21, n. 1.

² In some parts of the system, different divisions of the hypostases are employed, for example Intellect is subdivided into hebdomads. These divisions are usually the result of some exegetical problem in a dialogue of Plato or some other official text. In any case, Proclus really treats the hebdomad as though it were a group of three triads, but with the third division not fully realized.

³ My interpretation of the nature of the gods differs from those of some other writers quite radically. For a completely different view to my own

equivalent to (*Th. Pl.* 140) ὁ πρῶτιστος καὶ ὑψηλότετος διάκοσμος τῶν θεῶν, and so on.

At the beginning of this section, it was suggested that Proclus threw light on his concept of ὁλική νόησις first in his descriptions of the relationship between Intellect and Being, and secondly in his treatment of the relationship between the δημιουργός and the παράδειγμα. This second analysis, in fact, turns out to be virtually identical with the first, for these Platonic concepts are carefully integrated within the scheme of subdivisions which has been described.

In the *Timaeus Commentary*, we are told that the δημιουργός is the third of the νοεροὶ πατέρες,¹ that is to say he is the god who presides over the lowest of the triads within the hypostasis of Intellect. The παράδειγμα, on the other hand, should be placed according to Proclus κατὰ τὸ πέρας τῶν νοητῶν,² in other words within the third triad of the hypostasis of Being. It seems, as a result, that in this problem of Platonic exegesis we are really tackling in some form the problem of the relationship between the hypostasis of Intellect and the hypostasis of Being. Proclus' accounts of the relationship between the δημιουργός and the παράδειγμα are, however, extremely rich, and we shall see what further light they cast on the epistemological problem later on.³ Because of the demands necessarily involved in providing an interpretation of a given text, he is in many cases forced to adopt much more complicated solutions of the problem of mind and object than we have seen so far in this present section. Moreover, most of the scholarly work on the problem by modern writers has been in connection with Proclus' explanation of the δημιουργός and παράδειγμα rather than in terms of his theory of the three hypostases, and so we shall have more assistance in the task of interpretation.

In the course of our survey of the spiritual world, perhaps the most interesting fact which has emerged has been the apparent ambivalence of its nature. The governing principle of its structural organization, the notion of triplicity within unity, ensures that

cf. P. Merlan: 'Zur Zahlenlehre im Platonismus (Neuplatonismus) und im Sefer Yezira', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 3, 1965, pp. 167-181. The Sefer Yezira is a kabbalistic work which may be influenced by Proclus. A very interesting paper.

¹ in *Tim.* I. 311. 19-20.

² in *Tim.* I. 324. 21. Here, πέρας clearly means the *last* element.

³ We shall examine these in Chapter V.

from one point of view it is a unified whole, but from another a complex manifold. The significance of this fact for the conception of the relationship between mind and object is perhaps already apparent.

(d) *Neoplatonic logic*

Perhaps we should look at the results so far achieved. First, it has turned out that the interpretation of spiritual motion as dynamic logical relation depends upon a certain epistemological postulate, the interdependence of mind and object. Secondly, a detailed analysis of Proclus' conception of the spiritual world has shown that the hypostases of Intellect and Being constitute a multiplicity within unity in which Life is the mediator.¹ It would seem, therefore, that the epistemological demands of the interpretation have been met.² With this in mind, we may proceed to examine the dynamic logical relations which constitute the spiritual world of process in greater detail.

How does Proclus conceive the nature of these relations? Perhaps the best way to begin the inquiry into this problem would be to take some logical terms which are especially common in his discussions, and to try and see exactly how he handles them. The easiest one to take is undoubtedly 'difference' (ἐτερότης) which is particularly frequent inasmuch as it is one of the Platonic γένη derived from the famous passage in the *Sophist*,³ and naturally Proclus is very concerned with the interpretation of this Platonic dialogue. In the

¹ Throughout the remainder of the discussion, we shall be concerned with intellectual processes within the spiritual world of the higher hypostases, in other words with the *ὀλικάι νοήσεις* which we saw to be identified with the hypostases of Being, Life, and Intellect. Thus, when speaking of the relationship between mind and object, we refer primarily to the mind of the hypostasis of Intellect and the object of the hypostasis of Being. Moreover, when we speak of dynamic logical relation it is this higher logic (not necessarily accessible to human cognition) to which we refer. We find, unfortunately, no discussions of the relationship between this higher logic and our modes of thought in Proclus' extant writings. The Platonic commentaries which would (presumably) have dealt with the problem are lost. However, we shall probably not go far wrong if we say that the relationship between the lower and the higher was one of 'participation' (μέθεξις), in other words there would be some interpenetration between the two. Thus, our thinking will reflect the intellection of the higher hypostases.

² Cf. further the discussion on p. III ff.

³ Although Proclus does not always equate 'difference' with the Platonic γένος itself.

Parmenides Commentary he emphasizes the fact that difference is absolutely essential for all thought processes, and must be possessed as a characteristic in some way by the intellective subject. (*in Parm.* 900. 8-12) ἀλλὰ μὴν εἰ πρὸ τῶν νοούντων τὰ νοητά, δεῖ καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς εἶναι ἕτερον, διότι πᾶν τὸ νοοῦν ἑαυτὸ νοεῖ, καὶ τὸ ἑαυτὸ νοοῦν νοεῖ διὰ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ νοήσεως, οὐκ ἔξω ἑαυτοῦ βλέπον.¹ This, one might think, is a fairly commonplace observation and therefore gives us little cause for further comment. However the whole matter becomes infinitely more complicated when we compare some other passages in Proclus' writings, and we begin to realize the peculiar nature of the concept of difference for this philosopher. When, for example, in the *Platonic Theology*, he goes on to describe difference as δύναμις which is 'generative of existents' (γεννητικὴ τῶν ὄντων), it becomes clear that the apparently innocuous logical term is interpreted in a special metaphysical way.²

What are we to make of this unexpected equation between difference and 'power'? We can only conclude that if this is logic as conceived by the Neoplatonists, then it is a logic of a special kind, and possibly our analysis will have to be somewhat more protracted and more far-reaching than we had imagined. If difference is to be explained in terms of power (whatever precisely this may be), we shall be forced to begin our researches with the latter concept, and then at some later stage bring difference proper into the reckoning. From this point of view at least, Rosán's interpretation of spiritual motion which we noted briefly a little earlier seems to be on the right track, for it will be remembered that he was above all careful to emphasize the role of power. When he considered the meaning of the term 'relationship' he observed: 'Since a soul-possessing-a-mind also implies a mind-possessed-by-a-soul, logical implication alone cannot be the only factor that constitutes a relationship for Proclus. But if we add to this the fact that the mind-possessed-by-a-soul gives *power* to the soul-possessing-a-mind, but does not receive any power from it in return, we have completed the picture'.³ In some ways this interpretation is more

¹ The noetic theory which lies behind this passage should not puzzle us too much in view of what we have seen concerning the relationship between mind and object. That the process involves 'difference' is a new fact of considerable importance.

² *Th. Pl.* 228. In Chapter V we shall need to examine a more elaborate account of the function of difference.

³ Cf. p. 13.

perceptive than certain more recent ones which we shall consider later on, and although it is not possible to go along with the precise form of the logical relations which Rosán envisages, we can at least accept his starting-point, the consideration of power, as the best way into the whole problem of spiritual motion.

In the next three chapters, we shall attempt to build up a full picture of the way in which Proclus understands spiritual motion beginning from the notion of power. During this discussion, I think that it will become clear that we are discussing not only a theory of motion, but a theory of logic, and we shall constantly find essentially logical considerations becoming blended with strictly metaphysical problems and vice versa. However, provided that we are aware of this from the outset, it should not present too much of a problem to separate these distinct strands from the conceptual web.

CHAPTER TWO

POWER

(a) *The concept of 'emanation'*

The best starting-point for an analysis of what Proclus means when he employs the concept of δύναμις is to consider its origins, for he defines quite clearly at what stage in the process of spiritual devolution 'power' first shows itself. We must recall what was said in the last chapter about the structure of the spiritual world, in which immediately after the supreme principle of the One comes the triad of the First Limit, the First Infinity, and the First Mixture. Power originates in this primary group,¹ as explained in the *Elements of Theology*. (*El. Th.* 82. 23-26) πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀπειρῶν δυνάμεων μιᾷ ἐξῆπται τῆς πρώτης ἀπειρίας, ἥτις οὐχ ὡς μετεχομένη δύναμις ἐστίν, οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς δυναμένοις ὑφέστηκεν, ἀλλὰ καθ' αὐτήν, οὐ τινὸς οὔσα δύναμις τοῦ μετέχοντος, ἀλλὰ πάντων αἰτία τῶν ὄντων. The First Infinity becomes in this way a paradigm for all the manifestations of power at lower levels of reality, and differs from these other powers by not being specifically linked with any single entity, but being the cause of all transcendently.² In the *Platonic Theology*, this doctrine is worked out more fully, and the influence of the First Infinity is traced down through the spiritual hierarchy, and beyond into the sensible sphere. In the lowest realms, the infinite potency of becoming furnishes a prime example of its operation.³

Our present concern is, however, not with these specific manifestations of power which vary to a certain extent in accordance with the different contexts, but with the general laws governing its operation. These appear to be (i) the notion of the 'overflowing' of a cause, and (ii) the idea that a cause remains undiminished in this process.⁴

¹ The exact structure of this group was discussed on p. 20, where it was shown to manifest itself on two levels, the first of which had the constituent elements distinct (and prefigured the hypostasis of Being), while the second had the constituent elements combined (that is to say within the hypostasis of Being).

² The ubiquity of the element of ἀπειρία was discussed on p. 19 ff.

³ *Th. Pl.* 133-134.

⁴ As we shall see below, these two laws essentially complement one another.

(i) The most basic premiss which lies behind the idea of the causal efficacy of power is that which deals with the overflowing of power from the cause to the effect. This fundamental doctrine, not surprisingly, finds expression in the *Elements of Theology*, where Proclus informs us that (*El. Th.* 30. 25-26) πᾶν τὸ παράγον διὰ τελειότητα καὶ δυνάμεως περιουσίαν παρακτικὸν ἐστὶ τῶν δευτέρων. We shall return to the question of the 'completeness' of the cause later in this chapter, but the notion of the cause as giving off power is clear enough. Obviously, a cause possesses too much power to exist simply on its own, and the excess gives rise to effects or products. The overflowing of power would lead to a diminishing of the power in the cause, were it not for the second of the two laws.

(ii) The idea of the overflowing of power is normally coupled with the notion of undiminished bestowal. For example, in the proposition which immediately precedes the passage quoted above, we find that (*El. Th.* 30. 10-11) πᾶν τὸ παρακτικὸν αἴτιον ἄλλων μένον αὐτὸ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ παράγει τὰ μετ' αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς. Here, although power is not specifically mentioned, we can be sure that Proclus intends to attribute a very special characteristic to it, namely the ability to leave its source undiminished. This is made perfectly clear by numerous other passages in which the law is applied in specific cases. For example, in a passage dealing with the causal function of the gods, he writes (*El. Th.* 112. 19-24): καὶ οἱ μερικώτεροι γεννῶνται ἐκ τῶν ὀλικωτέρων οὔτε μεριζομένων ἐκείνων (ἐνάδες γάρ) οὔτε ἀλλοιουμένων (ἀκίνητοι γάρ) οὔτε σχέσει πληθυνομένων (ἀμικεῖς γάρ), ἀλλ' ἅφ' ἑαυτῶν δευτέρας ἀπογεννώντων προόδους διὰ δυνάμεως περιουσίαν, ὑφειμένας τῶν πρὸ αὐτῶν. The gods themselves are unchanged in any way, despite the fact that they give off power in the production of their effects.¹ Exactly how power is enabled to behave in this way is not explained in so many words by Proclus, but there is an answer which immediately comes to mind.

As was shown, power has its origin in the First Infinity, and it is likely that wherever power appears it will betray the nature of

¹ The use of the verb μένειν in this context to describe the unchanged nature of the cause has been amply discussed by J. Trouillard: 'La monή selon Proclus', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Paris 1971, pp. 229-238. It should be emphasized, as this writer is careful to do in his discussion, that this usage is different from that in which each effect is said to 'remain' in its cause. This latter sense will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

its origin by retaining the quality of infinity. Inexhaustibility is one of the basic senses in which infinity can be understood, and therefore power will show this inexhaustibility in the way it behaves in the causal process. Undoubtedly, Proclus thinks in terms of power as infinite, and it seems to be a special quality of the spiritual world. In the *Platonic Theology* we read that (*Th. Pl.* 126-127) τὸ γὰρ ἀίδιον πᾶν ἄπειρον ἔχει δύνανμιν, and that in this respect the spiritual world differs from the lower realm. It is, of course, the former with which we are concerned.

These two laws constitute the basic doctrine of power, and we should now add certain further remarks about the way in which power manifests itself as the force behind the causal process. The process which we have been considering is sometimes described in rather different terms, and these other descriptions, which are equally important in Proclus' writings, add further to our understanding of the theory of causation in the spiritual world.

First, the process is occasionally described as being one of 'emanation'. Proclus employs two words to convey this sense, (a) the verb ἐπινάεσθαι, and (b) the substantive ἀπορροή,¹ and both of these usages are fairly rare. The situation is different with modern interpreters of his philosophy, and these constantly refer to the causal process as emanation. Dörrie² has carefully examined the history of the second of these terms, and concludes that Proclus employs it in connection with physical phenomena but not in the metaphysical sphere. This judgement should be treated cautiously since Dörrie only studies one of the terms, while even that is not totally unknown in metaphysical contexts.³ However, he is perfectly justified in maintaining that emanation is by no means the standard way of conceiving the causal process. Proclus probably felt that the excessive physical connotations of the term precluded its application extensively in connection with the spiritual order.

The second type of description of the causal process which we must consider is that in which the spontaneity of production is

¹ For ἐπινάεσθαι cf. *in Tim.* I. 279. 11, and for ἀπορροή *Th. Pl.* 46.

² H. Dörrie: 'Emanation. Ein unphilosophisches Wort im spätantiken Denken', *Parusia, Festgabe für J. Hirschberger*, Frankfurt 1965, p. 137.

³ The employment of the term specifically in this sense has been noted by the recent editors of the first book of the *Platonic Theology*, cf. H. D. Saffrey and L. G. Westerink: *Proclus, Théologie Platonicienne, Livre I*, texte établi et traduit, Paris 1968, p. 152.

emphasized. Proclus often speaks of causation in the spiritual world as being αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι rather than κατὰ προαίρεσιν,¹ and by this opposition between the two modes he shows that the overflowing of power is automatic und unpremeditated. This doctrine is primarily designed to correct anthropomorphic ideas of divine creativity, and Proclus' thoughts on the subject have been concisely paraphrased by Trouillard:² 'A la différence d'Aristote, nous pouvons donc donner clairement à la divinité l'efficacité créatrice, tout en évitant que la démiurgie soit entamée par le mal ou sujette à l'ambiguïté du choix. Elle n'agira pas en divisant ni en dégradant ses puissances. Elle engendra en demeurant ce qu'elle est'.³ This passage summarizes very well the relationship between a number of the ideas which we have been considering, and in particular emphasizes the notions of the overflowing of power and the undiminished nature of the source.⁴

The fundamental nature of power is therefore fairly straightforward, and we shall not return to these basic concepts again. There is, of course, very much more to be said on more complicated aspects of its mode of operation, and we shall be considering these during the remainder of this chapter. However, it is first necessary to consider some ontological problems presented by the doctrine which are perhaps already obvious.

(b) *Three technical terms*

Clearly the most basic question we can ask about the nature of power is whether it 'exists' or not. In the last section where we were considering its fundamental features, we saw that power was possessed by various causes and effects which, of course, exist, but what about power itself? Its exact ontological status appeared a little ambiguous. To answer this question it will be necessary first of all to decide what Proclus understands by the notion of existence itself, and then to see how the concept relates to power. It will therefore be the aim of the present section to

¹ in *Parm.* 786. 19-21.

² J. Trouillard: '“Agir par son être même”, La causalité selon Proclus', *Revue des sciences religieuses* 32, 1958, pp. 347-357.

³ Trouillard, op. cit. p. 351.

⁴ For another discussion of Proclus' descriptions of the causal process involving spiritual entities cf. É. Bréhier: 'Les analogies de la création chez Çankara et chez Proclus', *Études de philosophie antique*, Paris 1955, pp. 284-288.

examine Proclus' writings, taking as wide a range of texts as possible, and to observe the use of certain technical terms all of which may in various contexts be translated 'existence'.¹ Although we shall translate these terms by one English word, it is clear that they are viewed as being quite distinct by Proclus, and we must therefore attempt to mark off their different senses from one another.

The first of the terms we shall have to consider is *ὑπόστασις*, and this is applied at both the spiritual and the sensible levels. Its use is, however, not absolutely universal, since Proclus seems to take into account the etymological connection with the verb *ὑφίστασθαι* which means 'to cause'.² The substantival form naturally conveys a strictly passive significance, and so a *ὑπόστασις* is something which has been caused by something else.³ One might not consider this a very severe limitation in such a philosophical system as that of Proclus, for according to its hierarchical structure, every entity is the effect of the previous one, and the cause of the next in succession. However, as we shall see, the sense of the word does preclude its application to the first three principles in the spiritual realm precisely for this reason.

The term *ὑπόστασις* has further connotations derived from its association with causation, for it is often linked with the idea of a compound or synthesis,⁴ a fact which a few examples from Proclus'

¹ In fact, all three of the technical terms to be considered in this section have a certain ambiguity which allows them to be translated not only as 'existence', but also as 'entity'. This is because Proclus not only links them with *ἔχειν*, saying that something 'has existence' (for example (*Th. Pl.* 54) *ἐν ἀπλότῃ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν*), but also couples them with *εἶναι*, saying that something 'is (an) existent' (for example (*El. Th.* 166. 11-13) *εἰ δὲ μὴ ταῦτα μόνον ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴ, οὐσία αὐθυπόστατος καὶ ζωὴ αὐτόζως καὶ γνῶσις αὐτοῦ γνωστικῇ, καὶ χωριστὴ κατὰ πάντα ταῦτα σωμάτων*). Of both these senses, examples will be given in this section, and to allow for the ambiguity of the Greek, I have resorted to the expression 'existence (entity)' when translating one of the terms into English, if there is no actual quotation in the original to limit it to one sense or the other.

² The history of the term and the various changes of meaning which it has undergone have been carefully discussed by R. E. Witt: 'ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ', *Amicitiae Corolla*, presented to J. R. Harris, London 1933, pp. 319-343, and H. Dörrie: 'ΥΠΟΣΤΑΣΙΣ, Wort- und Bedeutungsgeschichte', *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen* 1955, pp. 35-93.

³ As noted by H. Dörrie: 'Zum Ursprung der neuplatonischen Hypostasenlehre', *Hermes* 82, 1954, p. 331.

⁴ Why causation should be associated with synthesis in this way will be explained fully in the next chapter. To summarize the doctrine very

works should make clear. First, in the *Timaeus Commentary* he speaks of the existence of the physical universe and its constitution (*in Tim.* I. 297. 18-19): ἔτι σύνθετός ἐστιν ὁ κόσμος καὶ ἐξ ἀνομοίων ἔχει τὴν ὑπόστασιν. Furthermore (and this is perhaps the most important point), the term is associated with a type of compound causally dependent on the higher, namely the unified triad. For example, in the *Platonic Theology* he speaks of a triad as being a single entity (*Th. Pl.* 169): ἡ δὺς προσήκουσα τῇ μέσῃ νοητῇ τριάδι, τὴν μονοειδῆ καὶ κρύφιον ἐκφαίνουσα τῆς πρώτης [sc. τριάδος] ὑπόστασιν. Perhaps the most striking example of all, however, comes in the *Alcibiades Commentary*, where he speaks of the unity of the three elements of being, life and intellect within the human soul (*in Alcib.* 321. 8-12): καὶ ὁμῶς τοιαύτης οὔσης ἐν τοῖς ἄκροις κατὰ τὴν τριάδα ταύτην διαφορᾶς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ συνήνεται ἀλλήλοις, καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄν ζωὴ τε καὶ νοῦς ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ νοῦς καὶ οὐσία, ὁ δὲ νοῦς οὐσία καὶ ζωὴ. μία γάρ ἐστιν ἀπλότης ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ ὑπόστασις μία. All these examples emphasize the aspect of plurality that the various principles contain, and this notion is closely involved with another idea, that of process. Again in the *Timaeus Commentary*, Proclus can speak of something as (*in Tim.* II. 128. 8-9) ἀεὶ πληρούμενον τῆς ὑποστάσεως, and this usage clearly distinguishes the term from the next one which we shall discuss. Before moving on, however, we must briefly note to which entities in the spiritual hierarchy it may be applied.

The notion of causal dependence in effect precludes the application of the term to anything above the level of Being. In the first place, the One transcends ὑπόστασις,¹ being itself the first principle in the spiritual world, and in the second place, since the One does not itself produce triadically,² then neither the First Limit nor the First Infinity which follow immediately after it can be caused in this sense. Thus, the first three principles in the spiritual world are *uncaused* inasmuch as this term is not applied to them.

The next term to consider is ὑπαρξίς. This is applied as a general term for 'existence (entity)' at various different levels of reality,

briefly in advance, we may say that for any entity to reach its complete form, it must perform a triadic movement of remaining, procession, and reversion. Thus, for it to be understood in terms of its causal dependence upon the higher, it must be grasped in its triplicity.

¹ *In Tim.* I. 256. 3 ff.

² *Th. Pl.* 101-102.

and so it quite often functions as a straight alternative to the last term, especially in passages which are untechnical. It is, however, employed with greater frequency, since it does not suffer from the limitations to which the last term was subject, and it is therefore applied right up to the level of the One. The verb ὑπάρχειν, with which it is associated, is intransitive, and so the term is more readily linked with conceptually separate units.¹

The special peculiarities of ὑπαρξις become clear when we come to examine certain passages in Proclus' writings which associate the term with triadic formations. For example, in one passage he links it with the familiar notion of limit, which is always the first element in a triad. Speaking of Being, he writes (*Th. Pl.* 137): μετέχει γὰρ τῆς ἀπειρίας· καὶ τὴν μὲν ὑπαρξιν ἐκ τοῦ πέρατος κομίζεται, τὴν δὲ δύναμιν ἐκ τοῦ ἀπείρου, and the two aspects distinguished within it, existence and power, are shown to be manifestations of the basic triadic principle, of which much has already been said. The link with power in this formation is particularly interesting, and the idea is further developed in some passages where a third term, namely 'activity' is added to complete the group. Sometimes, the third term is 'intellect', and sometimes 'knowledge' as in the passage (*El. Th.* 106. 10-12) πᾶν τὸ θεῖον ὑπαρξιν μὲν ἔχει τὴν ἀγαθότητα, δύναμιν δὲ ἐνιαίαν καὶ γνῶσιν κρύφιον καὶ ἄληπτον πᾶσιν ὁμοῦ τοῖς δευτέροις. This association with the first element in triads is in striking contrast with what we saw to be the usage of the last term which was habitually attached not to the first element, nor indeed to any element at all, but rather to the triad as a whole.²

The difference between the two terms has been brought out well by Rosán who, agreeing at least in essence with the inter-

¹ For the history of the term cf. *Hadot* 1961, 1966, and 1968. Also cf. J. M. Rist: 'Mysticism and Transcendence in Later Neoplatonism', *Hermes* 92, 1964, pp. 213-225.

² Perhaps the most remarkable example of all of the use of this term is in the long description of the constitution of the World-Soul which fills a substantial part of the third book of the *Timaeus Commentary*. Its composition is described as follows (*in Tim.* II. 126. 30ff.): ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν τριπλὴν μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εὕρομεν τὴν ψυχὴν, ἔχουσιν οὐσίαν, δύναμιν, ἐνέργειαν, αὐτὴν δὲ πάλιν τὴν οὐσίαν τριπλὴν, κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρξιν, κατὰ τὴν ἁρμονίαν, κατὰ τὸ εἶδος, πεντάδα ποιήσομεν ἐκ τούτων, πρώτην μὲν τὴν ὑπαρξιν τάττοντες, δευτέραν τὴν ἁρμονίαν, τρίτην δὲ τὴν ἰδέαν, τετάρτην δὲ τὴν δύναμιν, πέμπτην τὴν ἐνέργειαν. Undoubtedly, the need to explain a number of terms mentioned in the Platonic dialogue has to a certain extent dictated the form of the division. However, it is highly significant that the term ὑπαρξις has been employed to describe the

pretation so far proposed, remarks: 'ὑπαρξίς is found throughout Proclus as the most general term for existence. Sometimes ὑπόστασις is used synonymously, but elsewhere an ὑπόστασις means an existent thing, its power and activity combined'.¹ In other words, the former is monadic whereas the latter is triadic. The particular sense of ὑπαρξίς which Proclus employs seems to have originated with Porphyry, as Hadot has noted. This writer has carefully analysed Porphyry's interpretation of the triad of Father, Power, and Intelligence, which he compares with Proclus. Of the latter he writes: 'On remarquera d'autre part que chez Proclus, le premier terme de la triade, le Père, est appelé aussi *hyparxis*, existence. Ceci répond encore une fois à la terminologie porphyrienne, qui employait *hyparxis* au lieu de *on* (étant) pour désigner le premier terme de la triade constitutive de l'Intelligence'.² Hadot's researches into the history of this term have yielded the same result as has our examination of Proclus' texts.

The association of this term with the first element in triadic formations suggests that unity would be an accompanying characteristic, and this is indeed what appears to be the case. For example, he speaks of (*in Parm.* 880. 22-23) ἡ ἀπλῆ καὶ ἐνοειδὴς τῶν οὐσιῶν ἐκείνη ὑπαρξίς in connection with the Forms which are unified, so to speak, at the summit of their being. The first element in a triad is unified, of course, because the triad itself when considered strictly in terms of this element is a unity, and only becomes a triplicity when all three elements are brought into view. Proclus often reasons from this to the idea of equating the second element with a dyad,³ and the interplay between unity and duality is quite often a feature of Proclus' metaphysical speculations. The importance of unity as a concept cannot be over-emphasized in the case of a philosophy such as this, for the ultimate cause of the whole of reality is the One, and so anything unified is closely related to it, therefore holding a special place of honour.

A further corollary of the association of ὑπαρξίς with the first

first element within the triad which composes the existence proper of the World-Soul, the result being that it is this element which is primal in the whole development. The passage is therefore very much in line with our conclusions so far about the meaning of the term.

¹ *Rosán* 1949, ch. iv, n. 5.

² *Hadot* 1966, p. 140.

³ *in Remp.* II. 45. 28.

element in triadic formations is its equation with the so-called 'flower of our being'. This interesting, and in the religious sense, very important doctrine is derived from the teaching in the *Chaldaean Oracles*.¹ It is explained by Proclus as follows (*in Alcib.* 247. 7-11): μετὰ δὲ τὸν πολυτίμητον νοῦν αὐτὴν τὴν ἄκραν ὑπαρξιν ἀνεγεῖραι δεῖ τῆς ψυχῆς, καθ' ἣν ἐν ἐσμεν καὶ ὑφ' ἧς τὸ πλῆθος ἐνίζεται τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν. ὥς γὰρ νοῦ μετέχουμεν κατὰ τὸν εἰρημένον νοῦν, οὕτω καὶ τοῦ πρώτου, παρ' οὗ πᾶσιν ἡ ἔνωσις, κατὰ τὸ ἐν καὶ οἶον ἄνθος τῆς οὐσίας ἡμῶν, καθ' ὃ καὶ μάλιστα τῷ θεῷ συναπτόμεθα.² The most important point made by this passage is that the ὑπαρξίς of Soul is identical with the primal source of its being. Soul, one may add, is produced triadically.

If we now turn to consider to which principles this term can be applied, we see that it does not suffer from the same limitations as the previous term, and that because of its more unified nature, it can be applied above the level of Being, the highest point at which the earlier could be employed with consistency. It is, in fact, the standard term used throughout Proclus' writings for the existence of the gods.³ The gods are also unities (ἐνάδες), and since the One is the supreme unity, the term is also applicable to it, Proclus often speaking in mystical language of the ἄρρητος ὑπαρξίς.⁴ In fact, it seems reasonable to assume that this term can be applied to any spiritual entity whatsoever, and a thorough examination of Proclus' writings would probably provide examples of all the possible contexts.

The third of the terms which we must consider in this section is οὐσία. This word is applied to a number of different levels in both the sensible and spiritual worlds, but is perhaps more anomalous in its usage than either of the others.⁵ This is for two reasons.

¹ In the *Chaldaean Oracles* themselves, the actual term is ἄνθος νοῦ (*Kroll* p. 11) rather than ἄνθος τῆς οὐσίας, as in the present passage. The distinction between the two expressions has been considered by J. M. Rist, *op. cit.* p. 217.

² For discussion of the doctrine cf. especially *Grondijs* 1960, W. Beierwaltes: 'Der Begriff des 'unum in nobis' bei Proklos', *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 2, 1963, pp. 255-266, and *Proklos, Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik*, Frankfurt 1965, pp. 367-382. The literature on the development of the doctrine in the mediaeval mystical tradition is very extensive.

³ *El. Th.* 106. 10.

⁴ *Th. Pl.* 132.

⁵ The history of this term is very closely involved with that of the first of the terms considered. For bibliography cf. the titles mentioned on p. 31, n. 2.

In the first place, it is in some contexts apparently synonymous with *ὑπόστασις*, but in other contexts it seems to be more equivalent to the other term, *ὑπαρξίς*. It therefore embodies characteristics of both the previous terms. In the second place, its use is made a little more confusing for us, since it is also the name of a specific principle in this system, the First Mixture or the hypostasis of Being.¹

Some passages in Proclus' writings treat *οὐσία* as the first element in a triadic formation, thus making it in a sense parallel to the usage of the second of the terms so far considered. Earlier, we saw how a triad could be formed of existence, power, and activity. In this context, *ὑπαρξίς* could be used as the first element because of its unified nature, whereas there were no examples of the use of the term *ὑπόστασις* in a similar way, since this latter conveyed the idea of synthesis in which the power and the activity would be embraced within it, and not contrasted with it. *οὐσία*, however, is contrasted in this way in many of the main texts, for example in a passage where he postulates the universality of the triadic principle (*in Tim.* II. 125. 12-13): *ἔστι τοίνυν ἐν ἐκάστη φύσει τὸ μὲν οὐσία, τὸ δὲ δύναμις, τὸ δὲ ἐνέργεια*. Here, there is a clear distinction implied between an entity and its generative power.

Other passages are equally insistent in stressing the compound or synthetic aspect of this term, and therefore link it more closely with the first of those considered. At one point, Proclus lays down a general rule about its applicability, and this is perhaps the clearest definition which we have (*in Tim.* II. 123. 21-24): *καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐπέκεινα πάσης οὐσίας, ἐπειδὴ πᾶσα οὐσία πλῆθος ἔχει μεθ' ἑαυτῆς*. Elsewhere, he connects the compound nature specifically with triadic formation, and in these passages a contrast with the unified nature of the *ὑπαρξίς* is often stated. This compound aspect is classified specifically as a mixture in the following example, for this last is in a sense the paradigm of all combination. (*Th. Pl.* 168) *τοῦ μὲν πέρατος τὴν ὑπαρξίν τὴν θείαν, τῆς δὲ ἀπειρίας τὴν γεννητικὴν δύναμιν, τοῦ δὲ μικτοῦ τὴν οὐσίαν τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἐνδεικνυμένου*. In such passages as this, the term seems to be synonymous with *ὑπόστασις*, signifying therefore the whole triad in which power and activity are already present. In fact, texts which show this synthetic

¹ The nature and composition of the First Mixture was discussed on p. 20.

connotation are just as common in Proclus as those which show the contrasting unified sense.

Besides this slight ambiguity of purpose in the use of the term οὐσία, there is also the added complication that the term functions as the name of a specific hypostasis.¹ This complication is, however, possibly more apparent than real, for the hypostasis itself is a mixture of the First Limit and the First Infinity, and is therefore merely one example, albeit the most important one, of the synthetic meaning of the term. In Proclus' system, higher levels of reality are in a sense paradigmatic of lower levels, and so he may well have simply considered the ultimate οὐσία (the hypostasis of Being) as manifesting in the most perfect way the synthetic nature of all lower entities. Thus, existence in fact becomes a synonym for mixture at different levels of the spiritual hierarchy. The term naturally cannot apply above the level of Being itself, and higher entities such as the gods are termed ὑπερούσιου.²

These, then, are the three terms employed in Proclus' philosophy to signify the concept of existence. On the whole, they are used with a high degree of consistency, and so reading the texts should not present many problems provided that the different usages are understood and kept apart. To summarize, we have seen that one term applies to the three elements combined in a triadic formation, and so expresses the aspect of triplicity, while another applies strictly to the first element in such a formation, and therefore expresses the aspect of unity, while finally a third term links these contrasting senses together and expresses either the aspect of triplicity or of unity, being applicable in contexts which emphasize the multiplicity of such a triadic formation or alternatively its more unified nature. In the light of this necessarily rather complex analysis, the reader may begin to appreciate the ambiguity of the notion of existence for Proclus. There is undoubtedly much more to be said on this subject, but we have probably seen enough to return to the main theme and to attempt some further delineation of the nature of power. With these points of terminology

¹ Proclus alternates between calling the hypostasis εἷν, and calling it οὐσία. Of the first usage, many examples have already been given, but for the second, which is rather less common, cf. *El. Th.* 100. 31. The relative infrequency of the second term suggests that Proclus was concerned about the problem of ambiguity.

² *El. Th.* 110. 2.

clarified, we can now approach it from the standpoint of its ontological determination. Expressed in simple words, we have to discover whether power exists or not. If the answer is in the negative, then we must understand its nature in some other way.

(c) *The ontological status of power*

If we run mentally over the different contexts in which power has appeared during our investigations so far, it will be clear that we can classify its uses into two categories. The first category (A) consists of those contexts in which the overflowing aspect is emphasized.¹ Here, power is something produced by an entity to enable it to perform its causal function, while category (B) consists of those contexts in which it appears as the second element in a triadic formation.² It would seem *prima facie* that we are here confronted with two different uses of the concept of power, and we must examine each of these in turn and try to determine them ontologically. The second category appears to present the least problems, and we should therefore begin with that.³

(B) It seems to be a general rule with Proclus that the second element in triadic groups can be identified with power. We have

¹ These passages were discussed on pp. 28-30.

² These passages were discussed on pp. 33 and 36.

³ Proclus himself, it is fair to say, does not always keep these categories apart, and it is possible to find passages in his works which seem to express ideas falling somewhere between the two. One notable example of this is the passage which is quoted later in this section (*Th. Pl.* 133) πᾶν γὰρ τὸ παράγον κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ παράγει δύναμιν μέσσην τοῦ παράγοντος καὶ τῶν παραγομένων ὑπόστασιν λαχοῦσαν. Here we see (a) power linked with the process of causation, but also (b) treated as the second element in a triadic formation. It would seem, therefore, to embrace aspects of both of the categories which have been distinguished. There is, of course, no mention of overflowing or any similar idea, and so I assign it to category (B), with which it has perhaps a greater connection. The ambivalence which we find in such passages is another aspect of the general ambiguity concerning the triads which runs through all Proclus' writings. Expressed simply, the problem is to what extent the elements in a triad are to be considered as separate entities. If the triad in which power is the second element is a single entity, then power must be subsumed under category (A). If, on the other hand, the triad is considered as three entities, then power must be subsumed under category (B). The result is that Proclus' attitude to the status of power is rather fluid, and he continually allows the concept to oscillate between one category and the other, depending upon the circumstances. It is of the utmost importance, however, if we are to understand fully the nature of this oscillation, that we should be absolutely clear in our minds about where the poles should be placed between which the movement takes place.

seen this identification take place in the case of specific triads, but it seems clear that the principle is one of universal application. In the *Platonic Theology* we find the words (*Th. Pl.* 230) τῇ γὰρ δυνάμει τὸ μέσον τῆς τριάδος ἀνάλογον. The use of the word ἀνάλογον is not, I think, a significant qualification, for elsewhere he seems quite happy to say that the second element is power. An example of this comes in the *Alcibiades Commentary*, a passage which is particularly interesting in that it shows first, the general applicability of the concept to both 'intelligibles' and 'intellectuals' (and by this he implies that it is applicable throughout the spiritual world), and secondly, the origin of the doctrine in ideas derived from the *Chaldaean Oracles*. (*in Alcib.* 84. 12-17) πανταχοῦ γὰρ ἡ δύναμις τὸ μέσον κεκλήρωται· καὶ ἐν μὲν τοῖς νοητοῖς συνάπτει τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν νοῦν, "ἡ μὲν γὰρ δύναμις σὺν ἐκείνῳ, νοῦς δ' ἀπ' ἐκείνου"· ἐν δὲ τοῖς νοεροῖς τὰς ἐνεργείας συνδεῖ πρὸς τὰς οὐσίας, ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐνέργεια γέννημα τῆς δυνάμεώς ἐστιν, ἡ δὲ οὐσία προάγει τὰς δυνάμεις ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς.¹

In the last section, two of the Greek terms which we examined were found to be opposed to the notion of power in this sense. Both of these occurred as first elements in the very triadic formation in which power turned out to be the second element. For this reason, it would seem unlikely that power could 'exist' at all in these forms.² The third term, however, was not opposed to power in the same way, and could perhaps escape this objection.

The question which we must now ask is whether power has the status of a ὑπόστασις in these triadic formations. Fortunately, the answer is not far to seek, for we find power described in exactly this way again in the *Platonic Theology*. In an interesting passage, power as the second element in a triadic formation is described as that which is μέσῃν ὑπόστασιν λαχοῦσα,³ and this use of the expression 'mediate existence' is highly significant. In this passage, we have an example of a triadic formation in which the triplicity is emphasized, and the three elements are viewed as independent

¹ *Kroll* p. 13.

² I here consider οὐσία as applying strictly to the first element, although we saw in the last section that the term does have another sense which might be more compatible with the nature of power. It would seem, however, that Proclus felt that its habitual placing before power in triadic formations precluded association with power itself. This, as we shall see, is by no means the case with ὑπόστασις.

³ *Th. Pl.* 133.

entities. Power itself, according to this passage, is one of these. There are many other passages in Proclus writings which imply the same conception of its nature.

(A) When Proclus is, on the other hand, speaking of power in its overflowing aspect, the question of whether it can be said to 'exist' is much more difficult to answer. It is difficult to associate any of the three terms with this particular manifestation, for the entity which gives off the power in the process of causation can reasonably be said to exist, no doubt having an appropriate status within a triad, but the power which it gives off is a much more mysterious factor. It seems to fall outside the proposed classifications altogether.

The attempt made by Rosán to explain the ontological status of power in Proclus' system is well worth considering in the present context.¹ Rosán seeks to explain the manifestation of power by introducing a completely new ontological category, which he calls 'being-in-some-sense'. This is a category which transcends simple existence, and can be applied both to existence and power. He explains the idea as follows: 'Prior to all categories and prior to all particular kinds of being, there must be some most basic kind of being that includes them all. For instance, when Proclus speaks of a unity and its power, both of which are "above being", and claims that the unity alone has its own existence, one asks: what about the power? It does not have "being"; it does not have existence; but surely it must be-in-some-sense! This "being-in-some-sense" must be possessed by everything, no matter what other characteristic it may have'.² It is a real problem to explain the ontological status of power, and Rosán has made an important point. Moreover, his solution of inventing a new ontological category is one which we should by no means dismiss, for the invention

¹ It will become clear that this interpretation differs from the one which I have suggested in two ways: (i) It does not distinguish the two categories, and so its remarks are intended to apply to power generally. (ii) It draws the opposite conclusion from the fact of the inclusion of power within triads. Of these two conclusions, I consider the first to be short-sighted in that it fails to notice a common distinction in the texts. The second I believe to be erroneous as a result of its failure to distinguish the different meanings of the various Greek terms which we translate as 'existence'. I quote this interpretation because it does at least appreciate the ontological problem, and thus raises the interesting matter of 'being-in-some-sense'.

² Rosán, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

of such a category would be perfectly within Proclus' capabilities. He is quite prepared, for example, to allow degrees of self-sufficiency, of which an instance has already been given,¹ and he repeats the same procedure with many other concepts. Nevertheless this interpretation must from the outset face the fact that Proclus himself never formulates the notion of 'being-in-some-sense' or anything similar.

It is to this interpreter's credit that he has fully appreciated the nature of the problem. However, another solution is possible which has the advantage of avoiding the necessity of introducing into the argument an ontological category which Proclus does not himself use.

(d) *The different varieties of power*

Proclus makes interesting further elaborations in the doctrine of overflowing power, and in various passages the causal process is explained in terms of the interaction of two types of power which are called ἀτελής and τελεία respectively.² If we wish to preserve his own framework of discussion, we should perhaps translate these terms as 'incomplete' and 'complete'. We may, however, more readily appreciate their significance by noting that they are broadly equivalent to potentiality and active power. Proclus is usually careful to distinguish these two senses, although they are by no means unrelated.

The most clear and precise formulation of the doctrine of the two types of power is found in the *Elements of Theology*, where three propositions and their associated proofs are devoted to the exposition of the theory. Proclus defines the first type of power in the following way (*El. Th.* 74. 11-12): ἡ δὲ ἄλλου του δεομένη τοῦ κατ' ἐνέργειαν προϋπάρχοντος [sc. δύναμις], καθ' ἣν δυνάμει τι ἔστιν, ἀτελής, which we may understand in terms of the familiar Aristotelian formula which has been set out in the immediately preceding proposition (*El. Th.* 72. 20-23) πᾶν τὸ δυνάμει ὄν ἐκ τοῦ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὄντος ὃ τοῦτο δυνάμει ἔστιν εἰς τὸ ἐνεργεῖα πρόεισι.

¹ For a discussion of this notion cf. p. 9.

² That the two varieties of power are an aspect of the doctrine of overflowing power should become apparent during this section. The important point to note is that they together form the basis of a process in which one principle causes or acts upon another.

τὸ μὲν πη δυνάμει ἐκ τοῦ πη κατ' ἐνέργειαν, ἢ αὐτὸ δυνάμει· τὸ δὲ πάντῃ δυνάμει ὃν ἐκ τοῦ πάντῃ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὄντος. There would seem to be little problem in comprehending the nature of this type of power, for it seems to be equivalent to the Aristotelian concept of potentiality.¹

The same general context gives us an explanation of the second type of power, for immediately before the description of incomplete power comes the definition of its opposite, complete power (*El. Th.* 74. 9-11): ἡ μὲν γὰρ τῆς ἐνεργείας οἰστική τελεία δύναμις· καὶ γὰρ ἄλλα ποιεῖ τέλεια διὰ τῶν ἑαυτῆς ἐνεργειῶν, τὸ δὲ τελειωτικὸν ἄλλων μειζόνως αὐτὸ τελειότερον, and a little further on, he explains it in slightly different terminology (*El. Th.* 74. 20-21): καὶ τὸ ποιοῦν, κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὁ τοῦτο [sc. τὸ γινόμενον] δυνάμει ἐστὶν ὑπάρχον, δύναμιν προειληφέναι τελείαν. Again we have no problem, for as in the case of the first type of power, there is an Aristotelian antecedent with which we may compare it. In this case, the antecedent is the Aristotelian notion of active power.²

The most interesting thing in these examples is, perhaps, the fact that a new and more rigid use of terminology has been introduced in connection with two varieties of power which are rooted in earlier philosophical tradition. Dodds,³ for example, has commented on the way in which the antithesis between the two types of power has become sharper in Proclus as compared with previous usage. However, the new use of terminology should arouse our attention even more, and make us consider whether there is not some special relationship implicit in the dichotomy, for the contrast between incomplete and complete is not just a contrast between two totally different and unrelated factors, but one between two poles of

¹ On the subject of power in Neoplatonism cf. A. C. Lloyd: 'Neoplatonic Logic and Aristotelian Logic', *Phronesis* 1, 1955-56, pp. 58-72 and 146-160.

² It is an interesting fact that Proclus explains his theory of power within the confines of Aristotelian terminology throughout these passages. This treatment is peculiar to the *Elements of Theology*. In the discussion which follows, it should become clear how much Proclus' notion of power differs from that of his predecessor. We may perhaps summarize the contrast between the two theories by saying that: (i) Proclus' concept of power differs from the Aristotelian notion in that it involves the concept of overflowing (and also of the complementary idea of undiminished bestowal). (ii) Proclus' concept also involves the idea of a continuum in which power is converted from a state of completeness to incompleteness and vice versa. (iii) Finally, according to Proclus power is intermittently hypostatized and not hypostatized.

³ *Dodds* 1963, p. 242.

defect and excess respectively. Unfortunately, Proclus does not develop the doctrine of the two varieties of power any further in the *Elements of Theology*, and so we must look for further information elsewhere. This is by no means in short supply.

In the *Platonic Theology*, a different terminology is employed. In one passage, for example (*Th. Pl.* 137), we find potentiality described as δύναμις κρυφία contrasted with active power which is here termed ἡ κατ' ἐνέργειαν δύναμις. The notion of the 'occult' nature of power is full of religious significance for Proclus, but despite this added level of meaning, we can easily recognize it as that which is, in more prosaic moments, simply styled potentiality. The contrary variety of power is described specifically in terms of its causal efficacy, a nomenclature perhaps clearer than the one employed earlier.

The most interesting passage in this work, however, is the long discussion of the varieties of power in which they are related to the supreme spiritual principles of the First Limit and the First Infinity, and in this passage the earlier dichotomy of incomplete and complete power is revived. It contains so many points which are important that it is perhaps best to quote the text in full, and to simplify the discussion which follows, it will be divided into numbered paragraphs, with the important technical terms spaced in each case. This description is the most extensive discussion of the problems concerned anywhere in Proclus' writings, but it is still not what we might call a complete analysis. We shall, therefore, have to expand considerably on the points which we are given.

Proclus has been discussing the nature of the hypostasis of Being, and he then moves on to consider the structural principles which lie behind it. The important passage comes next, and runs as follows¹ (*Th. Pl.* 138): (I) τὸ μὲν οὖν πρῶτως ὄν διὰ ταῦτα μικτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος προσείρηται· κατ' εἰκόνα δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ γένεσις μικτὸν ἐκ πέρατος καὶ ἀπείρου. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἄπειρον ἐν ταύτῃ δύναμις ἀτελής,

¹ It is in situations such as this, when the need arises to discuss an extended passage from the *Platonic Theology*, that we most of all lament the lack of a complete modern critical edition of the text (Saffrey and Westerink have so far only published the first volume of their new edition which runs to *Th. Pl.* 70). Recourse must therefore still be had to the edition of Aemilius Portus (1618). On the weaknesses of the latter cf. H. D. Saffrey: 'Sur la tradition manuscrite de la Théologie Platonicienne de Proclus', *Autour d'Aristote* (Recueil offert à A. Mansion), Louvain 1955, pp. 387-430, and E. Turolla: *La Teologia Platonica*, Bari 1957, Introduzione pp. v-xxxiii.

τὸ δὲ πέρας, εἶδος καὶ μορφὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ταύτης. διὸ ταύτην μὲν τὴν δύναμιν ὕλην τιθέμεθα, τὸ κατ' ἐνέργειαν οὐκ ἔχουσιν, τοῦ εἶναι καὶ τοῦ ὀρίζεσθαι δεομένην ἀλλαχόθεν· τὴν δὲ τοῦ ὄντος δύναμιν γεννητικὴν τῶν ἐνεργειῶν οὖσαν, καὶ πάντα τὰ ὄντα παράγουσαν ἀφ' ἐαυτῆς, καὶ τῶν τελείων δυνάμεων ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ὀριστικὴν ὑπάρχουσαν, οὐκέτι φαμέν ὕλην ἀποκαλεῖν θεμιτόν. (II) τὸ γὰρ ἐκείνης ἀνομοίως ἢ τῆς ὕλης μεμίμνεται δύνάμεις ἀτελῆς γενομένη, καὶ τὴν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τοῦ πλήθους ὠδῖνα, δυνάμει γενομένη τὸ πλήθος, ἀπεικίασας. καὶ μὴν καὶ τὸ εἶδος τοῦτο μιμεῖται μὲν ἐσχάτως τὸ πέρας, ὀρίζον καὶ αὐτὸ τὴν ὕλην, καὶ περατοῦ τὸ ἄπειρον αὐτῆς· πληθύεται δὲ καὶ μερίζεται περὶ αὐτήν, καὶ τῇ στερήσει συνανακέκρται τῆς ὕλης· καὶ τὴν ἄκραν ἔνωσιν τοῦ ὄντος ὑπάρξεως, τῷ εἶναι γινόμενον αἰεὶ καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ἀπεικονίασας. τὰ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ὄντα καθ' ὑπεροχὴν, ταῦτα ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτως ἐστὶ κατ' ἑλλειψιν. ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸ μὲν πρώτως ὄν μικτόν ἐστι, καὶ πέρατος ἀπείρου ζωῆς ἐξηρημένον, καὶ αἷτιον αὐτῆς ὑπάρχον· τὸ δέ, ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου τῶν εἰδῶν καὶ τῆς πρώτης ὕλης ὑφιστάμενον, ἄζων μὲν ἐστὶ κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν· δυνάμει γὰρ ἔχει τὴν ζωὴν. ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ τὰ γεννητικὰ προϋπάρχει τῶν ἀπογεννωμένων, καὶ τὰ τέλεια πρὸ τῶν ἀτελῶν ὑφέστηκεν· ἐνταῦθα δέ, τὰ δυνάμει πρὸ τῶν κατ' ἐνέργειαν, καὶ τὰ συναίτια τοῖς ἐξ αὐτῶν ὑποβέβληται. (III) τοῦτο δὲ οἶμαι συμβαίνειν ἀνάγκη, διότι τῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν αἱ δόσεις καὶ μέχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων διήκουσι, καὶ οὐ μόνον τὰ τελειότερα γεννῶσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἀτελέστερα κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν· καὶ διὰ ταῦτα τὸ μὲν μικτόν γενέσεως αἷτιον καὶ τῆς μεμιγμένης ἐνταῦθα φύσεως. After this, he proceeds to the consideration of the highest mixture of first principles in detail.¹

¹ I reproduce Turolla's translation of paragraph (II) which makes good sense of some ambiguities: 'In realtà, potenza di materia ne imita malamente la natura; divenuta com' è imperfetta, e divenuta in potenza, ne imita la capacità di produrre, quasi per parto, la pluralità. Così quella effinge la pluralità. Del resto, anche questa specie imita per via estrema il determinante che pur lui determina la materia, e ne determina l'indeterminazione. S'immilla e si divide nel rapporto con quella. E anche con la privazione della materia esso è commisto e si svolge ad imitare la somma ed eccelsa unità della sussistenza dell'essere, in un continuo processo di divenire e di distruzione. In realtà questi fatti hanno carattere di eccellenza nei primi gradi; di deficienza invece, nei gradi postremi. Poiché anche il primo essere è commisto e immune del limite al quale è sottoposta l'indeterminazione della vita; e ne è per questo causa. Ciò poi che ha sua origine dalla prima specie e dalla prima materia, secondo la propria natura, non ha in sé la vita. Ha infatti per potenza la vita. Colà infatti le cose generatrici hanno prelazione sulle cose generate e sussistono prima le cose perfette e poi le imperfette. Invece qui le cose in potenza, avanti a quelle in atto; e le concause sono sottoposte ai loro prodotti'.

In paragraph (I), Proclus contrasts the hypostasis of Being with the sensible world, both of which are shown to be mixtures of limit and infinity. The relationship between the two is particularly significant, for we are told that the lower is formed in the image (κατ' εἰκόνα) of the higher. Thus, whatever process occurs in the higher will be reflected in some mode by the lower, an example of this being the behaviour of power. In the highest mixture, infinity manifests itself as complete power, whereas in the realm of change, infinity appears conversely as incomplete power. This is, of course, the first definite indication we have had that the two forms of power may be related to each other.

Proclus then goes on to develop the idea of the relationship between the two realms, and in paragraph (II) we receive further information about the relationship between the image and its reflection. The imitation, we are informed, is ἀνομοίως, and of this we are given a number of examples which we need not repeat here. A little further on in the paragraph, however, there is a precision of the notion of 'dissimilarity', and this is simply the fact that the imitation takes place in reverse, and that whatever is present in excess (καθ' ὑπεροχήν) in the higher is reflected as deficiency (κατ' ἔλλειψιν) in the lower. Finally, we see that this principle applies in connection with power itself, for whereas earlier we simply saw that infinity was manifested as complete power in the higher, and as incomplete power in the lower, we now find added to this the notion of predominance.¹ The full picture is that in the higher the complete predominates over the incomplete (τὰ τέλεια πρὸ τῶν ἀτελῶν ὑφέστηκεν), whereas in the lower the incomplete predominates over the complete (τὰ δυνάμει πρὸ τῶν κατ' ἐνέργειαν). Thus, both types of power are present in both realms, but the priorities are different in each case.²

In paragraph (III) little is added to the account except a few words which seem to me to point to the idea of a continuum. He speaks of the causal activity of the first principles, and tells us that their efficacy extends as far as the lowest orders of reality.

¹ I feel that there is no other way to understand the word πρὸ than in the sense of predominance, at least in the present context. Temporal priority is clearly not implied, because the context is one of timelessness.

² The same doctrine is adduced in the *Timaeus Commentary* to explain how the World-Soul can have a 'divine beginning of ceaseless and intelligent life' (in *Tim.* II. 287. 25-27): καὶ γὰρ ἐν θεοῖς μὲν τὰ τελειώτερα πρὸ τῶν ἀτελεστέρων ἐστίν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐνύλοις ἐμπαλιν.

This efficacy is represented here by the use of one word (δόσεις) which is very often used in Proclus' writings to denote the transference of power from one level of reality to another. What is in fact implied is that a single principle is being passed down the hierarchy of reality, and that it begins its course among the highest orders and ends at the lowest (μέχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων διήκουσι). The really important point, however, comes in his next statement, namely that both the complete and the incomplete are generated by this process. If we couple this with his earlier remarks about the reflection of the higher by the lower, we are left with the distinct impression that the power of the higher is, at least predominantly, complete and is gradually replaced by the largely incomplete power of the lower orders, and that this process is continuous.

Various scholars have appreciated the peculiar nature of the hierarchy of power in Proclus' system, and Rosán ¹ seems to suggest something very similar in the course of his interpretation. He argues that reality consists of a continuous scale or hierarchy in which actuality is gradually replaced by potentiality in the descent. However, most writers have been cautious in reading any fully-developed theory of continuous transformation into the texts. They are perhaps justified in doing so, since the above account was rather sketchy, and required a considerable amount of reconstruction and elaboration. There are, however, other passages which can be interpreted as supplying a number of further details which have been lacking to the account so far, and these will be discussed in the course of the next chapter.

(e) *Incompleteness and non-being*

References to the ontological status of power as a continuum are not common in Proclus' writings, but we can form an idea of his attitude to one pole of the process by examining some passages in the *Platonic Theology*. Occasionally, he raises existential questions about incomplete power as matter or the analogue of matter,² and the answers he suggests are worth noting. Unfortunately, these references are all in the form of afterthoughts or footnotes to discus-

¹ Rosán, *op. cit.* pp. 79-80.

² When speaking of power existentially, Proclus always seems to think in terms of ὑπόστασις. This is reflected by the passages to be quoted in this section.

sions of other topics, and so Proclus gives us no really full explanation.

First of all, we should observe the words which he used at the end of paragraph (III) of the long passage considered in the last section. There he spoke of the generation of different levels of reality, both the more complete and the more incomplete, according to their existence (κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν). The implication is that different levels of reality are more or less appropriately associated with existence depending upon the degree of completeness of the power which is associated with them. This idea is developed further in another passage where he stresses the connection between the two types of power, and then goes on to determine the ontological status of the incomplete (*Th. Pl.* 134): δυνάμει δὲ ἡ ὕλη τὰ πάντα καθόσον ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ὑπέστη δυνάμεως· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ μὲν γεννητικὴ τῶν πάντων ἡ δύναμις, ἡ δὲ τῆς ὕλης δύναμις ἀτελής καὶ τῆς τῶν πάντων κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὑποστάσεως ἐνδεής.¹ Here, Matter itself is described as lacking the existence of all that is actual, and again we are given the impression of a contrast of levels in which the higher has a greater degree of existence than the lower. The reference to Matter indicates that Proclus is thinking specifically of that type of incomplete power which occurs in the sensible world, but undoubtedly the existential point applies to incomplete power at any level of its spiritual devolution.² In one final passage, he again refers to Matter, but this time he expands his terms of reference slightly by speaking not of a lack of existence but of 'non-being'. (*Th. Pl.* 160) καὶ δύναμις μὲν ἐστίν, ἀνείδρον δὲ ὄν καὶ μὴ ὄν· ἀποπέπτωκε τῆς τοῦ ὄντος μετουσίας. It is equivalent to power, and as such represents the final and weakest expression of spiritual force.³

¹ This passage is mentioned by Lloyd, op. cit. p. 147.

² The analogy between the different levels of matter in Proclus' system will be examined briefly in the next chapter.

³ The term 'non-being' has, of course, a far wider sense than the expression ὑποστάσεως ἐνδεής which we found in the earlier passage. In the first place, it does not restrict the notion of existence to its manifestation as ὑπόστασις. Presumably, the terminology could be taken to imply that power was to be dissociated from other types of existence as well (which is what we should have expected in any case). More importantly, the use of the term 'non-being' suggests that the inherent negation could be taken predicatively, and not existentially at all. Unfortunately, a study of Proclus' use of the predicative sense would take us beyond the limits of the present study, but it

Although these passages are rather vague, we can perhaps draw some conclusions. Since power is to be viewed as a continuum, it is not possible to say that it exists or does not exist at any particular stage of its devolution. At the highest levels, power is existent to the maximum degree, while at the lowest, it verges on the non-existent. At intermediate levels it naturally has a blend of existence and non-existence. These conclusions, of course, require some degree of extrapolation from the texts, for they spoke in existential terms only of the lower end of the continuum. However, the nature of the whole continuum is implied in at least one of the passages, and the general interpretation proposed seems the most reasonable.

is worth noting that the existential and predicative senses are not always distinguished by Proclus in the writings which survive. Various types of negation are discussed at *in Parm.* 1073. 23ff.

CHAPTER THREE

CAUSATION

(a) *The triad of remaining, procession, and reversion*

In the last two chapters, we have been concerned with the analysis of certain doctrines of Proclus which are fundamental to the understanding of spiritual motion. In the first place, we have examined the epistemological framework in which the idea of spiritual motion must be set, and in the second place, we have considered the nature of power as an integral part of the process. However, Proclus' descriptions of the motion itself have not yet been studied, and these must occupy our attention in the present chapter. It will, of course, be necessary to refer continually to points made earlier.

The reader may recall some remarks made in the Introduction, where the nature of spiritual motion was briefly described within the context of Neoplatonism as a whole. There, we considered Plotinus' account of the procession and reversion of the hypostasis of Intellect upon the One,¹ and saw that it was this motion of a principle in relation to its prior which gave us our most crucial problem of interpretation and the starting-point for the whole inquiry, since the apparent notion of process had to be reconciled in some way with the contradictory idea of the immobility of the hypostasis. Moreover, this example of procession and reversion was seen to be the paradigm of all the causal processes which take place at lower levels in the hierarchy of reality.² For this reason, the present chapter will be entirely devoted to considering the question of procession and reversion, since it is in this form that the nature of spiritual motion is most clearly shown.

When we come to consider the mechanism of causation in Proclus, we are confronted immediately by the greater formalism of this philosopher, for here the process is not a duality in the way suggested above, but is in fact viewed as taking a triadic form, the triad in this case being that of *μονή*, *πρόοδος*, and *ἐπιστροφή*.

¹ Cf. pp. 2-3.

² Cf. p. 2.

Perhaps we should turn immediately to some texts which explain this group of concepts. The basis for our discussion throughout this chapter will be furnished by the *Elements of Theology*, although there is also much assistance to be gained on specific points from the commentaries.

The three elements¹ are brought together in a proposition which enunciates a general law of causation. It runs as follows (*El. Th.* 38. 9-10): πᾶν τὸ αἰτιατὸν καὶ μένει ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ αἰτίᾳ καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς αὐτήν. The proposition shows us that these elements are involved in every process of causation and are inseparable, but does not give us a definition of any of the three. There is, however, a very clear definition of the first two at least in the earlier passage (*El. Th.* 34. 23-27) ἡ μὲν ἄρα ταῦτόν τι πρὸς τὸ παράγον ἔχει, τὸ παραγόμενον μένει ἐν αὐτῷ· ἡ δὲ ἕτερον, πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. ὅμοιον δὲ ὄν, ταῦτόν πῃ ἅμα καὶ ἕτερον ἐστι· μένει ἄρα καὶ πρόεισιν ἅμα, καὶ οὐδέτερον θατέρου χωρὶς. It is a pity that this passage does not give us an explanation of the nature of the 'reversion', but we can understand the 'remaining' and the 'procession' in a definite sense. Every effect in the hierarchy of reality, that is to say every entity which is causally dependent upon another, is similar (ὅμοιον) to its prior cause. This similarity involves the presence simultaneously both of an element of identity (ἡ μὲν ἄρα ταῦτόν τι) with the cause in the effect, and an element of difference (ἡ δὲ ἕτερον) from the said cause. Because they are combined in the notion of similarity, the two aspects are inseparable (οὐδέτερον θατέρου χωρὶς), and part of one relationship.²

Other passages give us a further precision of the nature of the triad, for example in one passage, Proclus emphasizes the notion of circularity in the process (*El. Th.* 36. 11-15): πᾶν τὸ προῖδν ἀπὸ τινος καὶ ἐπιστρέφον κυκλικὴν ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν. εἰ γάρ, ἀφ' οὗ

¹ On the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion as the structure of motion in Proclus cf. H. Schrödter: 'Kinesis. Eine Untersuchung über Denkart und Erfahrungshorizont des Platonismus am Werk des Proklos', *Parusia, Festgabe für J. Hirschberger*, Frankfurt 1965, pp. 219-237.

² This special nature of similarity (ὁμοιότης) as a combination of identity and difference will be discussed at considerable length later in this chapter. It illustrates Beierwaltes' theory of 'dynamische Identität', and is clearly one of Proclus' most important concepts. We shall consider it in greater detail on pp. 54-58, and again on pp. 74-77. The notion of the inseparability of the two constituent elements represented by the words οὐδέτερον θατέρου χωρὶς will be considered in terms of the doctrine of power in the third section of this chapter, in particular on pp. 70-72.

πρόεισιν, εἰς τοῦτο ἐπιστρέφει, συνάπτει τῇ ἀρχῇ τὸ τέλος, καὶ ἔστι μία καὶ συνεχὴς ἡ κίνησις, τῆς μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ μένοντος, τῆς δὲ πρὸς τὸ μεῖναν γινομένης. Here, the missing link is the remaining, which is perhaps omitted because its very title suggests a state rather than a process, and in this passage especially, the concepts of process and motion (κίνησις) are emphasized.¹ It is well worth comparing the descriptions of procession in this passage and in that which was quoted just before, procession being the only one of the three terms which is common to the two descriptions. In the first, the idea of procession was clearly expressed in logical language as the element of difference in an effect, but in the second passage, procession is half of a cycle of motion which the effect must accomplish. We therefore have to consider whether there may be some inconsistency or contradiction between the two accounts.²

The answer is, I believe, fairly clear, for if there is any conflict at all, it is the conflict which we have been led to expect throughout this study. Earlier, it was suggested that the only way in which the spiritual motion in Proclus' system could be understood was as logical relation, and here we seem to have a clear and definite statement on the part of the philosopher himself that the triad of causation, although viewed as a κίνησις, can be explained simply by the logical categories of identity and difference between a cause and its effect. The main problem, of course, with such a simple reduction of the one to the other is that we have no statement of the nature of reversion in terms of the idea of logical relation, and no statement of the nature of remaining in terms of the concept of motion. These omissions on the part of Proclus will assume a considerable significance for the interpretation of the triad to be advocated in a later section of this chapter.

Two points should be noted in the context of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion. The first is the association of the triad itself (or at least of two of the terms within it) with motion,

¹ For procession as motion cf. *in Parm* 734. 24-25: ἡ δὲ διακριτική, προόδῳ δὲ χαίρει καὶ ποικιλίᾳ καὶ κινήσει, and for reversion as motion cf. *Th. Pl.* 57: καὶ τῇ μὲν κινήσει ταύτῃ καὶ τῇ ἐφέσει σώζει τὰ πάντα.

² It will be a fundamental thesis of the present writer that there is no conflict between them. Later in the present chapter, it will be shown that the concepts of logical relation on the one hand and of the motion of power on the other are complementary and inseparable aspects of the same phenomenon.

for in an earlier chapter of the present work¹ it was shown that this triad could be reduced to that of limit, infinity, and mixture, and that the main difference between the triads was that the one is dynamic whereas the other is static. It was also argued that the equation of the dynamic and static in this way epitomized the problem of spiritual motion in Proclus' metaphysical system. We can, I think, claim that the aforesaid static element has already been dealt with at some length, and that we are now considering in the form of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion an essentially dynamic side of the system. Thus, we must now be very clear in our minds that we are dealing with a triad of motion, and not simply with a triad in the earlier sense.

The second point which should be carefully observed is that we are dealing with a triad viewed in terms of its unity. In the same earlier chapter, we noted that all the triads in Proclus' system could be viewed either as unities or else as triplicities,² but it is quite obvious that in the case of the remaining, procession, and reversion in the general propositions about causation, we are dealing with a unity, for these propositions deal with the hypostatization of a single effect, as is made abundantly clear by the wording in each case. That is not to say that this particular triad can never be viewed in the triple form,³ for in the last section of this chapter we shall consider some texts which show the concepts treated in precisely that way. However, it is fair to say that when the triad is normally discussed, the unified aspect of the whole formation is very much the dominant feature.

These points are naturally very closely connected, and really different aspects of the same thing, for it is only in cases where the three elements are combined in a single unity that the dynamism can really be made intelligible, a fact which we saw to determine the nature of a *ὑπόστασις* in the last chapter.⁴ We shall therefore combine these together as a single assumption which will underlie the argument during the next three sections, and provided this is borne in mind, it should be possible to provide a clear and unambiguous account of all the concepts involved in the process of

¹ Cf. pp. 19-20.

² Cf. p. 19.

³ Cf. the remarks on the ambivalence of the triadic idea on p. 38 and especially p. 38, n. 3.

⁴ Cf. pp. 31-32.

causation. It will appear that Proclus has a very precise and carefully organized doctrine which incidentally contains the key to the whole concept of spiritual motion.

(b) *The circular motion of the effect*

It is now possible for the first time to consider the interpretation of spiritual motion as logical relation in some detail, for the basic ground has been sufficiently covered to allow us to move on from generalities to particulars. It is proposed to adopt a dialectical tone in the present section, and to suggest a new interpretation in the process of examining another recent interpretation which, despite many penetrating insights which have put our knowledge of Proclus' logic on a completely new footing, seems to me to underestimate a vital factor which determines the nature of spiritual motion. The interpretation is that of W. Beierwaltes in his *Proklos, Grundzüge seiner Metaphysik* and is by far the most complete treatment of the basic metaphysical doctrines of Proclus which we possess. He tackles the problem of spiritual motion largely from the standpoint of the explanations which Proclus gives of the familiar Platonic doctrine of the *κοινωνία εἰδῶν* in his *Parmenides Commentary*, and uses these as a basis on which to interpret the nature of the spiritual world as a whole.¹

¹ The interpretation of the interrelation between the Forms in Proclus' commentaries is a very interesting topic. The *κοινωνία* in the Paradigm is discussed fully at *in Tim.* I, 430. 18ff. (For Proclus of course the plenitude of the Forms is an essential constituent of Intellect, and the Paradigm is an intellect). However, an even more interesting point comes at *in Parm.* 739. 34ff. Here, four levels of *ἐναντία* are distinguished, material, heavenly, psychic, and noetic, each set having different characteristics. The doctrine is summarized as follows (*ibid.* 740. 27ff.): *καὶ τὰ μὴν περὶ τὴν ὕλην ἐναντία φεύγει ἀλλήλα, τὰ δὲ οὐρανία σύνεστι μὲν ἀλλήλοις, ἀλλὰ κατὰ συμβεβηκός· τὸ γὰρ ὑποκείμενόν ἐστι τὸ ἀμφοτέρων ἅμα δεκτικόν· τὰ δὲ ἐν ψυχαῖς καθ' αὐτὸ σύνεστιν ἀλλήλοις, αὗται γὰρ αἱ οὐσαὶ συνάπτονται ἀλλήλαις· τὰ δὲ ἐν τῷ νῷ καὶ μετέχει ἀλλήλων· ἀπὸ τῆς μετοχῆς οὖν καὶ τῆς συναφῆς καὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ παρουσίας ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλλήλων φυγὴν ἐτελεύτησεν ἡ τῶν ἐναντίων πρόοδος.* The noetic 'opposites' which participate each other are, of course, the Forms, and in a sense, the problem for Proclus was to secure the unity of Intellect at the same time as allowing a sufficient distinction between the many Forms it contained to allow human dialectic to function. This is ultimately dependent upon the Forms. His solution was the concept of *ἀσυγχύτως μετέχειν* (*ibid.* 755. 10-11), in which each Form although maintaining its distinctness can interpenetrate others according to the appropriate logical rules. This concept of interpenetration between Forms is very close to the ideas about the interpenetration of other principles which we have already considered, and is used as an example in Beierwaltes' interpretation.

Beierwaltes begins his theory of the nature of spiritual motion by considering the nature of the triads on which, as we have seen, Proclus' entire system is constructed. He interprets their nature as being one of 'dynamische Identität', a concept which he explains as follows: 'Das Mit-Sein oder In-Sein jedes einzelnen Gliedes der Trias im anderen auf die ihm je eigene Weise muss als dynamisch-ontologische Identität im Gegensatz zu einer statisch-logischen oder tautologischen Identität gedacht werden. Dynamisch-ontologische Identität legt den Sinn des Titels *κοινωνία* oder *ἀσύγχυτος ἔνωσις* in Hinblick auf das Wesen von Trias aus: Trias ist seiende Einheit *und* (oder: in der) Vielheit, seiende Identität *und* (oder: in der) Differenz. Die Differenz oder die in der Selbstidentität der einzelnen Glieder der Trias sich verwirklichende Andersheit begründet die *subordinative* Gliederung jeder Trias. Diese wiederum ist Urbild und Ursache für die *subordinativ-hierarchische* Gliederung des Systems aller Triaden überhaupt. Dynamisch-ontologische Identität sagt also, dass Identität in Hinblick auf das Sein jeder Trias und des Systems aller Triaden immer auch Differenz einschliesst, so dass das System, welches das Ganze von Seiendem und Über-Seiendem ist, nie als absolute, homonyme oder monistische Identität verstanden werden kann. Die Charakterisierung der Identität als dynamische zeigt aber auch an, dass die in der Identität selbst mitgesetzte Differenz die Einheit des Einzelnen und des Ganzen nicht zerstört, sondern vielmehr diese zu einer, gerade durch die Andersheit des Einzelnen intensivierten, *lebendigen* Einheit macht'.¹ The dynamic identity of the triad lies in the fact that each element 'participates' (Mit-Sein oder In-Sein) the others, and that the whole is therefore from different points of view a unity and a triplicity. In other words, the identity involved is not a simple identity, but an identity coupled simultaneously with difference, and the tension produced by the simultaneity of the two opposites gives the whole relationship a distinctly dynamic flavour. All this is very much in line with what we have already seen to be the essence of triadic formations in Proclus' system, the only new element being the actual concept of *κοινωνία*. This

¹ *Beierwaltes* 1965, pp. 34-35. I shall treat the various terms which Beierwaltes uses to translate *ταυτότης* (Identität, Selbigkeit) and *ἐτερότης* (Differenz, Andersheit) as synonymous. The basic notion of dynamic identity, at least, does not seem to be affected by the variety of terminology.

occurs mainly in the commentaries rather than in the theological works which we used as our basis earlier.¹

What Beierwaltes goes on to say about the simultaneous coupling of opposites seems to tie in very effectively with what Proclus says about the relationship between remaining and procession in the passages quoted in the last section, for there is, as we saw, a tension created between a cause and its effect. Beierwaltes himself is quite aware of this connection, for in a later passage he writes: 'Sofern das Verursachte in der Ursache bleibt, ist es mit ihr identisch, sofern es aus ihr hervorgeht, ist es verschieden von ihr. Ähnlichkeit aber ist Selbigkeit und Andersheit zugleich. Da jedoch das Verursachte *zugleich* in der Ursache verharret *und* hervorgeht, und Selbigkeit und Andersheit demnach nicht zu trennen sind, kann dieser Prozess nur durch Ähnlichkeit signiert sein'.² In this passage, the writer partly paraphrases Proclus' definition of remaining and procession, but the idea of tension between identity and difference is very much emphasized in terms of his own dynamic interpretation of the logical relation. However, there is absolutely no reason to assume that Proclus' further thoughts on the subject, had they been added to this proposition, would have been much different from those supplied by his modern interpreter.³

¹ Naturally, the five Platonic γένη play an important role in Proclus' speculations about the interpenetration of Forms, and especially in the present context ταύτων and θάτερον. The best discussion of the relation between all five comes at *in Tim.* II. 133. 12ff. This passage shows how the five notions of Existence, Identity, Difference, Motion and Rest are reflected at different levels of the spiritual world, and various solutions to the problem of their most appropriate allocation are discussed. Perhaps the most important feature is that the γένη are placed alternately below the First Limit and the First Infinity, Identity being associated with limit, and Difference with infinity. On the importance of ἑτερότης in particular cf. *ibid.*, 247. 1-3: ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν νῶ διαίρεσις ἐστίν, ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἑτερότης, ἀλλὰ πρῶτως καὶ οἷον ἐγκρυφίως καὶ ἀδιαρέτως.

² Beierwaltes, *op. cit.* p. 132. Here, Beierwaltes introduces the concept of ὁμοιότης which is so important for Proclus' conception of the causal cycle. We shall discover more about this a little further on, but cf. also p. 50, n. 2.

³ It is probable that Proclus intends the identity and difference which he uses in connection with the definition of remaining and procession to be parallel to the two homonymous concepts included among the five γένη. We find remaining and ταυτότης associated at *in Tim.* II. 223. 16-18, and procession and ἑτερότης associated at *ibid.* 13. 26-27. It must, however, be admitted that neither of these two passages comes from within a technical discussion of the five, and the language is probably fairly loose.

The reconciliation of identity and difference is very much a province of the hypostasis of Intellect, according to Beierwaltes, and throughout the development of his interpretation, he speaks of the basic formal principles in connection with the nature of this hypostasis. 'Der Ort, in dem sich die Einung des Unterschiedenen vollzieht, ist der Geist (νοῦς): dieser ist um soviel "einiger als die Erkenntnis (diskursives Denken), dass er deren ganze Mannigfaltigkeit umfasst und die ganze Entfaltung teillos vorwegnimmt"'.¹ It is undoubtedly fair to understand the structure of spiritual reality in terms of this hypostasis, for we have already seen how closely involved it is with the whole evolution of the higher realm. It is not simply one link in a chain of being which is separated from other links, but it interpenetrates other spiritual levels by reflecting their natures within itself as they do its nature within themselves. The complex relationship which we observed between Intellect and Being was sufficient to show us how important this interpenetration is. Plurality and unity are present simultaneously within Intellect, and also identity and difference, and so it provides an excellent example of the reconciliation of contradictories.²

This reconciliation is, of course, only possible in Intellect because of the fact that it transcends both space and time, as this writer

¹ Beierwaltes, op. cit. p. 36. This passage includes a translation of Proclus' own statement (*in Parm.* 752. 20-23): [νοῦς] δὲ τοσοῦτόν ἐστι τῆς ἐπιστήμης ἐνικώτερος ὥστε πᾶσαν αὐτῆς τὴν ποικιλίαν περιέχειν καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀνέλιξιν ἀμερίστως προειληφέναι.

² It is important to inquire to what extent Proclus would be prepared to admit that the *κοινωνία* which we find within the hypostasis of Intellect is parallel to those between other spiritual entities. We unfortunately have no statement from Proclus which will allow us to make a definite ruling. However, it seems that Proclus does imply some sort of parallelism for the following reasons: (i) He treats the *γένη*, which are the most important among the Forms, as being applicable to the various spiritual levels in passages such as *in Tim.* II. 133. 12ff. (ii) Elements of intellect are contained in other hypostases according to the rules of triadic subdivision which we have already discussed at some length. Each of these elements will be a plenitude of Forms, and so the result will be that other hypostases contain Forms. (iii) The most important consideration is the fact that Proclus sees the Forms as being individually linked with *ἐνάδες*, as in the passage which is found at *in Parm.* 803. 6ff. The unities preside over the successive triadic subdivisions, and so in a sense the Forms will also have a link with these subdivisions. It is difficult to believe that Proclus could have been completely consistent in applying such a doctrine of Forms, for the logical problems involved in organizing the Forms into appropriate hierarchies must have made any direct parallelism with the normal hypostatic development of the spiritual

emphasizes. 'Die Ortlosigkeit des νοῦς ist gerade der Grund dafür, dass er eine alle Unterschiedenheit integrierende Einheit zu sein vermag, wie seine Zeitlosigkeit alles Vor und Nach in das immer-seiende Zugleich immer schon aufgehoben hat und nur durch diese Wesenhaftigkeit Urbild von Zeit als deren Prinzip sein kann'.¹ The atemporality and non-spatiality of the spiritual world was the original reason for interpreting the spiritual motion as logical relation, and Beierwaltes re-emphasizes the point because of Proclus' standard descriptions of the life of Intellect which are often tinged both with the notion of time and with that of space, thereby becoming problematic.²

Finally, he argues that the whole notion of dynamic identity is not to be viewed simply as a question of logic, but is of ontological significance. To show this, he makes an analysis of the relation between mind and object in the form of a study of Proclus' concept of language, and concludes: 'Die Mannigfaltigkeit der Worte aber macht durch den Sachbezug die Mannigfaltigkeit und Unterschiedenheit des Seienden in sich selbst offenkundig: Wort ist als Name des jeweils in sich seienden Seins der Sache "unterscheidendes Werkzeug." In dieser Unterscheidung ist es "lehrend" und "zeigend" das Wesen der Dinge: ὄργανον διδασκαλικὸν καὶ ἐκφαντορικὸν τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων οὐσίας. So gewährt auch die Sprache durch ihre Sinngerichtetheit die Einsicht, dass das im νοῦς Seiende ontologisch und nicht nur "logisch" unterschieden ist, und deshalb auch die κοινωνία des Unterschiedenen ontologisch zu fassen ist'.³ This passage functions as a corrective to possible misapprehensions which may have arisen about the logical relation implicit in the idea of dynamic identity. The identity and difference which we

world an impossible task. This probably explains the lack of any really complete exposition of the topic in the works of Proclus which we have. Nevertheless, the fact that he accepted the idea in general principle, which seems quite definite, is enough to enable us to extrapolate from what he says about the interrelations between Forms to the interrelation between other principles.

¹ Beierwaltes, *op. cit.* p. 40. This question has been discussed earlier in the present study, on which cf. pp. 7-9.

² See, for example, the passages in Proclus' writings which introduce the causal triad itself. One notable case is that quoted on p. 11. This question is, of course, the most fundamental of all those which have been raised, and an answer was sketched in a preliminary fashion during Chapter I.

³ Beierwaltes, *op. cit.* pp. 38-39. Here, the writer again refers to passages in Proclus' own writings (*in Crat.* 20. 20 and (the quotation) *ibid.* 16. 12-13).

find simultaneously within Intellect are, although logical categories, embraced within a real existent, and therefore also ontological ones. The relationship between language and reality is one of parallelism in which the word functions as a tool for separating the various threads which comprise the web of real being, that is to say the categories themselves.¹

This short summary of Beierwaltes' argument about the nature of spiritual motion cannot do full justice to the subtlety of his interpretation. However, it will at least have shown how much its fundamental postulates are aligned with the results of the present investigations. One important aspect is, nevertheless, absent from this interpretation, namely a treatment of the function of power within the system of spiritual motion, and this omission seems to be the main weakness in his version. If we look through Beierwaltes' account for a discussion of power, we shall be somewhat disappointed, for it is barely mentioned, and its function is not related to the main argument. Perhaps before leaving our exegesis of this interesting interpretation, we should pause and see exactly what it does say on this subject.²

Beierwaltes' discussion of power is summed up in two passages, of which the first deals with its function as the middle element in triadic formations. 'Die Funktion der Vermittlung: dass das Sein im Geiste immer schon vom Denken durchdrungen ist, und dass der νοῦς immer schon in der Sinnrelation zum Sein als dem zu Denkenden steht, kommt dem Leben zu, da es δύναμις ist. δύναμις ist hier zu verstehen als kraft ihres Wesens nach "ausen" wirkende Mächtigkeit. Das Wirken von δύναμις ist Teilhabe, Verursachung, Verbindung und Einung der Extreme in der Trias. So ist Leben als δύναμις die zeitfreie Vermittlung der Trias Sein-Leben-Denken mit sich selbst. Es erwirkt die Selbstdurchdringung dieser Drei in die Einheit und die Erschliessung jeder Eins in die Dreiheit'.³

¹ Beierwaltes implies that the epistemological context within which we must understand the nature of spiritual motion is one of interdependence between mind and object. This, it will be recalled, was also the opinion of the present author. For a discussion of this important question cf. p. 15ff.

² The question of power is likewise not discussed in his more recent short study of the nature of 'Andersheit' (cf. BIBLIOGRAPHY), despite a careful analysis of a number of related concepts such as infinity, and the 'indefinite dyad'.

³ Beierwaltes 1965, p. 97. This passage paraphrases Proclus' remark (*Th. Pl.* 135) ἡ δὲ ζωὴ τὸ προῖον ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχῶν καὶ τῇ ἀτελείῳ δυνάμει συμφύον.

In the triad which he discusses here, the element of Life is an exemplification of power, and he goes on to argue that in such contexts, it performs a special function in uniting the three elements. The relationship between these involves dynamic identity, and this is therefore the closest that Beierwaltes comes to explaining the function of power within this theoretical framework. However, what is really needed is a precise explanation of the function which power performs in each type of logical relation, in identity, in difference, and in similarity. Unfortunately, the interpretation of power is not developed in this direction, a fact which is particularly to be lamented because the groundwork of his interpretation is so promising.¹

Beierwaltes' other passage about power does not come any closer to what we are seeking. He writes: 'Der Grund dafür, dass Ursache die Bewegung von Hervorgang und Rückkehr aus sich entspringen lässt, ist ihre "Vollkommenheit" (τελειότης) und ihre "Überfülle an Mächtigkeit" (δυνάμειως περισυσία). Diese überfließende Mächtigkeit ist in der Ursache auf die Weise der Möglichkeit der seiende Vorentwurf des Verursachten. "Jegliche Ursache hat in sich das Verursachte vorweggenommen, ursprünglich seiend, was jenes entsprungener Weise ist". Die "vorweggenommene" Möglichkeit als Mächtigkeit in der Ursache aber bleibt trotz des Hervorgangs als ermöglichender Grund des Wirklichen immer sie selbst, und insofern hat Hegel recht, wenn er sagt: "diese überfließende Möglichkeit ist die Wirklichkeit überhaupt." Was in der Mächtigkeit der Ursache als möglich Seiendes ineinandergefaltet war, entfaltet sich im Hervorgang, der als Übergang von der Möglichkeit zum Wirklichen die bewegte Mannigfaltigkeit und Unterschiedenheit des verursacht Seienden wirkt und ist. "Das Zeugende gründet unveränderlich und unvermindert (in sich), indem es sich durch seine zeugende Mächtigkeit vermännigfaltigt und aus sich selbst zweite Hypostasen sein lässt"'.² In this passage,

¹ In the passage quoted, Beierwaltes does not distinguish the two basic categories within which Proclus' references to power fall. Such a distinction between overflowing power and power as the second element in triadic formations, as advocated on pp. 38-41, is absolutely essential if we are to understand its nature fully.

² Beierwaltes, op. cit. p. 131. In this important passage, the writer paraphrases and quotes several passages from Proclus' works including (i) (*El. Th.* 62. 16-17) πᾶν τὸ αἰτιον ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸ αἰτιατὸν προεληφθε, πρώτως ὄν

he paraphrases several of Proclus' own remarks about power, but fails to probe beneath the surface, and discuss the really crucial issue. We must discover, for example, in what way the 'überfliessende Möglichkeit' on which he quite rightly lays such emphasis is related to the tension of identity and difference that formed the starting-point for his own important notion of dynamic identity.¹

Clearly we can accept much of Beierwaltes' interpretation, for we have already seen the evidence which can support it. However, we must at the same time attempt a much more detailed examination of power, if we are to fully understand the nature of spiritual motion. We must discover how the different manifestations of power discussed in the last chapter relate to the various logical categories, and to do this we must examine the behaviour of power specifically in connection with the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion, something which we have not so far considered. Once we have studied power in this way, we shall be able to come back and say a few more things about Beierwaltes' interpretation in the light of interesting new discoveries.²

(c) *The circular motion of power*

In the first section of the present chapter, we examined Proclus' various pronouncements about the remaining, procession, and reversion of an effect (αἰτιατόν) upon its cause. It is, however, a fact that we often find him speaking not of the circular motion of the effect, but of the circular motion of power.³ This change of

ὅπερ ἐκεῖνο δευτέρως, and (ii) (*ibid.* 32. 6-9) ἀναλλοίωτον ἄρα τὸ γεννῶν ἵδρυται καὶ ἀνελάττωτον, διὰ γόνιμον δύναμιν ἑαυτὸ πολλαπλασιάζον καὶ ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ δεύτερας ὑποστάσεις παρεχόμενον.

¹ Here, Beierwaltes runs together the two concepts of incomplete and complete power. Although related, these are two different concepts, as shown on pp. 41-43.

² An interesting treatment of the relationship between power and otherness can be found in J. Trouillard: 'Sur un pluriel de Plotin et de Proclus', *Bulletin de l'Association G. Budé*, Paris 1958, pp. 88-91.

³ When Proclus speaks of the circular motion of the effect or of the circular motion of power, he naturally means non-spatial circularity. In his philosophy, this represents a carefully evolved doctrine, and we should perhaps note a few passages which make clear exactly what the conception is. (i) *in Tim.* II. 249. 8-11. Soul, inasmuch as it is an 'unfolded Intellect', constitutes a κύκλος ἀσχημάτιστος καὶ ἀμεγέθης καὶ αὐτοκίνητος. (ii) *in Remph.* II. 46. 18-27. ὁ μὲν κύκλος εἰκὼν ἐστὶ νοῦ· μένει γὰρ κατὰ τὸ ἐντὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ πρόεισιν

terminology should not be viewed as involving any inconsistency, for we have already seen how Proclus' concept of existence is fundamentally dynamic, and so it would be very easy for him to shift from one way of speaking of the process to the other. Moreover, this transposition will appear even more logical when we come to

κατὰ τὰς γονίμους αὐτοῦ δυνάμεις καὶ ἐπιστρέφει πρὸς ἑαυτὸν κατὰ τὴν πανταχόθεν αὐτὸν περιλαμβάνουσαν ὁμοίως γνῶσιν. καὶ τὸ μὲν κέντρον εἰκὼν τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ νοητοῦ καὶ ἀμεροῦς καὶ ἐφετοῦ, αἱ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κέντρου γραμμαὶ εἰκόασιν ταῖς ἀπειρίοις αὐτοῦ δυνάμεσιν, δι' ὧν παράγει πᾶν τὸ ἐν ἑαυτῷ πλῆθος τῶν νοητῶν· ἡ δὲ περιφέρεια, δι' ἧς συνελίσσεται πάλιν εἰς τὸ κέντρον καὶ περιπτύσσεται πανταχόθεν αὐτό, ταῖς νοήσεσιν ταῖς εἰς τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ νοητὸν ἐπεστραμμέναις. This passage is extremely important for breaking down the notion of circularity into its various factors, in showing that spatial circularity (with which it is concerned) is an 'image' of something higher in Intellect, presumably the non-spatial circularity of the first passage, and for emphasizing the importance of power. (iii) in *Eucl.* 52. 20ff. In the human soul, the imagination (φαντασία) takes the objects provided by Intellect and εἰς μερισμὸν καὶ διάστασιν καὶ σχῆμα προάγει τὰ γνωστὰ αὐτῆς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πᾶν, ὅπερ ἂν νοῆι, τύπος ἐστὶ καὶ μορφή νοήματος, καὶ τὸν τε κύκλον διαστατῶς νοεῖ τῆς μὲν ἐκτὸς ὕλης καθαρεύοντα νοητὴν δὲ ὕλην ἔχοντα τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ. Here we see how non-spatial ideas in the higher realm are projected into space as they descend, the circle being an example. The spatiality is provided by the accumulation of 'intelligible matter' on the immaterial idea. There is a fairly extensive bibliography on this aspect of Proclus' thought, and in particular cf. J. Trouillard: 'Le sens des médiations proclusiennes', *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 55, 1957, pp. 338-342; J. Trouillard: 'La monadologie de Proclus', *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 57, 1959, pp. 318-319; W. Beierwaltes: 'Eine Reflexion zum Geist-Begriff des Proklos', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 43, 1961, p. 121ff.; A. Charles: 'Sur le caractère intermédiaire des mathématiques dans la pensée de Proklos', *Études Philosophiques* 22, 1967, pp. 69-80; A. Charles: 'Note sur l'ἄπειρον chez Plotin et Proclus', *Annales de la Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines d'Aix* 43, 1967, pp. 147-161; S. Breton: *Philosophie et mathématique chez Proclus*, Paris 1969, pp. 110-123; G. R. Morrow: *Proclus, A Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*, translated with Introduction and Notes, Princeton 1970, pp. xxxiii-xxxvi; A. Charles: 'L'imagination, miroir de l'âme selon Proclus', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Paris 1971, pp. 241-248. The δύναμις which is present in the spiritual world does not cause any spatial projection of circularity for, although in its incomplete form it is analogous to matter (both sensible and intelligible), it transcends both of these. This idea is expressed in a passage (*Th. Pl.* 137-138) where Proclus criticizes Plotinus' theory that there is intelligible matter in the spiritual world. Proclus argues that this realm contains not matter, but only power. As we have seen in passage (iii), Proclus also has a doctrine of intelligible matter, but he confines it to the intermediate level of mathematical objects where the aspect of spatiality first appears. Perhaps the following table will make the doctrine clear:

- (1) spiritual world: δύναμις (non-spatial)
- (2) μαθηματικὴ οὐσία: ὕλη νοητή (spatial)
- (3) sensible world: ὕλη αἰσθητή (spatial)

consider the nature of activity in the next chapter.¹ In the meantime, we must look carefully at a number of passages in the *Elements of Theology* which deal with spiritual motion specifically in terms of power.

The analysis should probably begin from the proof attached to an important proposition which states that the gods, when they manifest themselves, do so in triadic groups. The first element (ἀκρότης) in any such group is responsible for the procession of power, the second (μεσότης) is responsible both for the procession and for the reversion of power, while the third element (τέλος or ἀποπεράτωσις) is responsible for the reversion of power. The really important part of the description deals with the various directions in which power is transmitted by these elements (*El. Th.* 130. 6-16): ἡ μὲν γὰρ [sc. ἀκρότης], ἐνικωτάτην ἔχουσα δύναμιν, εἰς πᾶσαν αὐτὴν διαπέμπει τὴν ἔνωσιν καὶ ἐνοῦ πᾶσαν ἄνωθεν, μένουσα ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς. ἡ δὲ μεσότης, ἐπ' ἅμφω τὰ ἄκρα διατείνουσα, συνδεῖ πᾶσαν περὶ ἑαυτὴν, τῶν μὲν πρώτων διαπορθμεύουσα τὰς δόσεις, τῶν δὲ τελευταίων ἀνατείνουσα τὰς δυνάμεις, καὶ πᾶσι κοινωνίαν ἐντιθεῖσα καὶ σύνδεσιν πρὸς ἄλληλα· μία γὰρ οὕτως ἡ ὅλη γίνεται διάταξις ἐκ τε τῶν πληρούντων καὶ τῶν πληρουμένων, ὥσπερ εἷς τι κέντρον εἰς τὴν μεσότητα συννευόντων. ἡ δὲ ἀποπεράτωσις, ἐπιστρέφουσα πάλιν εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὰς προελθούσας ἐπανάγουσα δυνάμεις, ὁμοιότητα καὶ σύννευσιν τῇ ὅλῃ τάξει παρέχεται. In this passage, besides the word δύναμις, various alternative expressions are employed to describe power, for example, in the second sentence Proclus speaks of the transmission of δόσεις, a word very frequently used in his works and one which signifies the power which any cause gives off when producing its effect. However, the main point to notice in this description is that it is power which is described as undergoing procession and reversion in relation to its source, and not as in most of the passages we have considered earlier, the effect.²

The passage quoted above immediately gives rise to the question whether the power which is transmitted remains the same throughout the circular course which it travels in relation to the cause, or whether it undergoes some form of transformation. Unfortunately, Proclus' descriptions of the behaviour of power are not generally

¹ In the last chapter, we saw how the term 'existence' frequently involved the concept of triplicity. This triplicity, in which power plays such an important role, serves to give existence itself a definite dynamic aspect.

² Cf. pp. 49-51.

very explicit, but it is possible to build up a definite picture by comparing a number of passages which deal with the nature of the hierarchies which compose the spiritual world.

It is a fundamental postulate of Proclus that a cause is more 'powerful' than its effect, that is to say, the higher a cause stands in the hierarchy of reality the more power it possesses. This idea appears at the beginning of a proof attached to the second general principle of causation (*El. Th.* 54. 25-26): εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν αἷτιον, τελειότερόν ἐστι καὶ δυνατώτερον τοῦ μετ' αὐτό. The word τελειότερον, which we may translate 'more complete' is of particular significance here, for it shows that the general mechanism of causation is closely linked with the notion of the continuum of power which was discussed in the last chapter.¹ There, it was shown that the whole of the spiritual world, when viewed in terms of power, was of the nature of a continuum between the most complete and the most incomplete. If we now couple this idea of a continuum with the concept of the circular motion of power in relation to its source, we may conclude that the movement of procession would involve a transformation of power from the complete to the incomplete form, and that the movement of reversion would involve a transformation of power from the incomplete to the complete.

These ideas seem to be supported by two passages which link the circular motion with the concept of completeness, for we find, on the one hand, the movement away from the cause accompanied by a decrease in the degree of completeness in the proposition (*El. Th.* 38. 30-32): πάντων τῶν κατὰ πρόοδον πληθυνομένων τὰ πρῶτα τελειότερα τῶν δευτέρων ἐστί, καὶ τὰ δεύτερα τῶν μετ' αὐτά, καὶ ἐφεξῆς ὡσαύτως, and on the other, the movement towards the cause accompanied by an increase in the degree of completeness in the proposition (*El. Th.* 40. 7-9): πάντων τῶν κατ' ἐπιστροφὴν ὑφισταμένων τὰ πρῶτα ἀτελέστερα τῶν δευτέρων, καὶ τὰ δεύτερα τῶν ἐξῆς· τὰ δὲ ἔσχατα τελεώτατα. In one further passage which should be quoted in the present context, power is discussed specifically in conjunction with the movement away from the cause (*El. Th.* 58. 16-21): πᾶσα δύναμις ἀμέριστος μὲν οὖσα μείζων ἐστί, μερίζομένη δὲ ἐλάττω. εἰ γὰρ μερίζεται, πρόεισιν εἰς πλῆθος· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, πορρωτέρω γίνεται τοῦ ἐνός· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, ἐλάττω δυνήσεται, τοῦ ἐνός καὶ τοῦ συνέχοντος αὐτὴν ἀφισταμένη· καὶ ἀτελής, εἴπερ τὸ

¹ Cf. pp. 43-46.

ἐκάστου ἀγαθὸν ὑπάρχει κατὰ τὴν ἔνωσιν. Here, we have a description of the procession of power from the higher causes in the hierarchy down to the lower orders, in the course of which power becomes divided and incomplete because of its plurality.¹ The introduction of the word ἀτελής in the last sentence is a sudden and interesting turn, but by no means surprising in view of what has been gleaned so far about the transformation of power.

It now seems that the two types of power distinguished in the last chapter are even more closely related to one another than we thought, for we now see that complete power is converted into a more incomplete state during procession, and that incomplete power can be converted into a state of relative completeness by reversion. The question now arises whether it is reasonable to speak of complete power on the one hand and of incomplete power on the other, or alternatively of just one power which undergoes a totally circular transformation, becoming complete or incomplete depending upon which stage of the cycle is in process. One clause in the first passage cited in the present section, I believe, shows that the power which proceeds and reverts is essentially one, for it speaks of 'carrying back the powers which have proceeded' (τὰς προελθούσας ἐπανάγουσα δυνάμεις). Quite clearly, it is the processive power itself which is reverted upon its source.²

¹ In Proclus' system, the association of plurality and incompleteness is particularly interesting, the reason for the link being the placing of the One at the head of the hierarchy of reality. The higher a cause is to be found in this hierarchy, the more unified it is considered to be, while the lower it stands in this hierarchy, the more pluralized it is considered to be. Thus, an increase in completeness is automatically accompanied by an increase in the degree of unity, while a movement towards incompleteness is also a lapse into plurality. Proclus can therefore argue, either from degree of completeness to degree of unity, or in reverse. The whole theory of multiplicity is summarized in the following passage (*El. Th.* 58. 22-32): πᾶν πληθὸς ἐγγυτέρω τοῦ ἑνὸς ὅν ποσῶ μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν πορωτέρω ἔλαττον, τῇ δυνάμει δὲ μεῖζον. ὁμοίον γὰρ τῷ ἐνὶ μᾶλλον τὸ ἐγγύτερον· τὸ δὲ ἐν πάντων ἦν ὑποστατικὸν ἀπληθύντως. τὸ ἄρα ὁμοιότερον αὐτῷ, πλείονων αἰτίον ὑπάρχον, εἴπερ ἐκεῖνο πάντων, ἐνοειδέστερον ἐστὶ καὶ ἀμεριστότερον, εἴπερ ἐκεῖνο ἓν. ὡς μὲν οὖν ἐνὶ τῷ ἦττον πεπληθυσμένον μᾶλλον συγγενές, ὡς δὲ πάντων αἰτίῳ τὸ πλείονων παρακτικόν — τοῦτο δέ, δυνατώτερον. ἐκ δὲ τούτων φανερόν ὅτι πλείους μὲν αἱ σωματικαὶ φύσεις τῶν ψυχῶν, πλείους δὲ αὐταὶ τῶν νόων, οἱ δὲ νόες πλείους τῶν θεῶν ἐνάδων· καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος. One important thing should be emphasized in connection with power and plurality, and that is that an increase in the quantity of power is always an increase in the unity of power. In other words, quantity should not be associated with plurality (as one might expect on first reflection), but in fact with the reverse.

² It is perhaps a little difficult to decide whether all the powers which

One very important problem remains to be solved before we can really understand the process of transformation, for although the various manifestations of power are clear enough, we have not yet decided which power to associate with the cause and which with the effect. It is extremely important to settle this point, for if all the power which underwent the process of cyclic transformation belonged to the cause, or if it all belonged to the effect, there could be no question of transference from the one to the other. The idea of transference from the cause to the effect is very common in Proclus' arguments, and is usually expressed in the form (*El. Th.* 132. 1-2) ὑποδέχεσθαι τὰς τοῦ παράγοντος δυνάμεις. If this process did not take place, every member of the spiritual hierarchy would be severed from its priors and its consequents, and the operation of causation would be prevented altogether. Clearly then, some part of the cycle of power must belong to the cause, while another must belong to the effect. Our next task is to decide which, and on the principles already worked out, it is possible to see a solution to this problem. However, we must first reformulate it in a rather more complex form.¹

In the earlier discussions, we spoke of complete power converted into incomplete power by procession, and of incomplete power converted into complete power by reversion. Thus one might reasonably speak of four stages in the transformation of power, (i) the power which is initially complete (that is to say the complete

are in operation during the causal process are in fact one power which is undergoing continuous transformation, or several powers which can be transmuted into one another. The distinction is fortunately not so important because the entire process can be understood perfectly well from either point of view. In this chapter, I prefer to think in terms of one power for two main reasons: (a) Statements made by Proclus such as the one quoted speak of the processive power itself as undergoing reversion. (b) The reduction of power to a continuum leads inevitably to a breaking-down of hard and fast divisions in the system. I am, however, conscious of the remark made in the passage just quoted (*El. Th.* 58. 16-17) πᾶσα δύναμις ἀμέριστος μὲν οὖσα μεζῶν ἐστὶ, μεριζομένη δὲ ἐλάττων. This might well lead us to believe that the divisions between different powers are more pronounced in the lower orders of reality, and become progressively more insignificant as one ascends towards the unity of the One, the upshot being that both the above viewpoints are correct.

¹ The division between cause and effect shows that Proclus' system is not technically pantheistic. A similar point has been argued in connection with Plotinus by C. Rutten: 'La doctrine des deux actes dans la philosophie de Plotin', *Revue philosophique* 146, 1956, pp. 105-106.

element in the procession), (ii) the power which is finally incomplete (the incomplete element in the procession), (iii) the power which is initially incomplete (that is to say the incomplete element in the reversion), and (iv) the power which is finally complete (the complete element in the reversion).¹ We must consider which of these four stages belong to the cause, and which to the effect.

The passage in which Proclus uses the Aristotelian formulae in connection with his own dichotomy of incomplete and complete power is very instructive in this context. It gives us the following useful information about the allocation of the four stages in the process of transformation. First, we are told that in any causal process it is necessary for (*El. Th.* 74. 20-21) τὸ ποιῶν, κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὁ τοῦτο [sc. τὸ γινόμενον] δυνάμει ἐστὶν ὑπάρχον, δύνάμιν προειληφέναι τελείαν. This shows us that the cause possesses complete power, while the verb προειληφέναι shows that this complete power must be the initially complete (i). In an earlier passage we find that incomplete power must be in a certain situation before it can function within the causal process. (*El. Th.* 74. 11-14) ἡ δὲ ἄλλου του δεομένη τοῦ κατ' ἐνέργειαν προϋπάρχοντος, καθ' ἣν δυνάμει τι ἐστίν, ἀτελὴς· δεῖται γὰρ τοῦ τελείου ἐν ἄλλῳ ὄντος, ἵνα μετασχοῦσα ἐκείνου τελεία γένηται. Here, the use of the words 'incomplete' and 'complete' and their coupling with the verb γένηται show that we have a description of the process of transformation from the initially incomplete (iii) to the finally complete (iv), both of which are explicitly associated with the effect. Finally, we are told that (*El. Th.* 72. 20-21) πᾶν τὸ δυνάμει ὄν ἐκ τοῦ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὄντος ὁ τοῦτο δυνάμει ἐστὶν εἰς τὸ ἐνεργεῖα πρόεισι, in other words that the effect can only arise from the complete power of the cause. The finally incomplete power (ii) must therefore belong to the effect.

The result of this whole analysis is that one stage belongs to the cause, whereas no less than three stages are explicitly associated with the effect. This is probably the reason why, in Proclus' usual formulations of the laws of causation, the whole process is spoken of as being of the effect rather than as of the cause, for example in the proposition (*El. Th.* 34. 12-13) πᾶν τὸ ἀπὸ τινος παραγόμενον ἀμέσως μένει τε ἐν τῷ παράγοντι καὶ πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, and in many

¹ Throughout the following discussion of the transformation of power, I have employed the same numbering for the different phases whenever they are mentioned, even individually.

of the passages already quoted. A little later, we shall consider the exact significance of this apparent imbalance in the causal process and find an answer to a problem which has baffled many commentators, but before doing so we must make a slight digression and tackle a point which arises from an earlier argument.

In the last chapter, we saw that power could be understood as a continuum between the complete and the incomplete, and that this continuum stretched from the highest levels of the spiritual world down to the lowest regions of the sensible. At that point, the continuum of power appeared to be a directional one of simple ascent (accompanied by gradually increasing degrees of completeness), and simple descent (accompanied by gradually increasing degrees of incompleteness).¹ In the present chapter, however, we have expanded considerably on this idea of continuum, and it now seems more likely that it is a circular one. We must try to understand exactly how these two accounts fit together.

Perhaps a hypothetical example will make the situation clear. The spiritual hierarchy may be held to consist of a series of degrees, *a, b, c, d, e, f*, etc. Each of these will then be placed at a different level in the continuum of power, and so *a* will have maximum complete power and minimum incomplete power, whereas *f* will have maximum incomplete power and minimum complete power, and all the intermediate degrees *b, c, d, e*, will have intermediate levels of both types of power. Yet, between each degree and the next, power moves in a circle in which it is transformed from complete into incomplete power and then back into complete power again. I think that there is no conflict between these two accounts, for as each degree contains a mixture of the two types of power, there is absolutely no reason why a full cycle of transformation should not take place between it and the next degree. Rather, the picture which emerges is that the cycles must be weighted heavily in the direction of complete power at the higher end of the series, that the two types of power must be more or less equally balanced in the central cycles, and that the lower cycles must be heavily weighted in the direction of incomplete power. Thus, in cycle *a - b* maximum complete power is only partially transformed into incomplete power, in cycle *c - d* intermediate complete power is transformed into intermediate incomplete

¹ Cf. pp. 45-46.

power, while in cycle $e-f$ minimum complete power is totally overwhelmed by incomplete power.¹

Proclus, unfortunately, gives us no complete description of this process, and so we are forced to reconstruct its main outlines from various hints. However, we have simply been combining various items of information which he provides, and then going on to draw the obvious logical conclusions from them. Indeed, we only have to make a survey of all the uses of the terms 'complete' and 'incomplete' in the descriptions of the process of causation to produce a picture like the one outlined above. I believe that any other conclusion could only result from ignoring the meanings of Proclus' own technical terminology. However, we must now return to our main discussion of the cycle of transformation.

In the first part of this section, we spoke of the continuum of transformation between incomplete and complete power and vice versa. So far, however, there has been no real analysis of 'completeness' (τελειότης) itself, a concept which has not received nearly enough attention on the part of earlier commentators.² The nature of completeness should be fairly obvious from what we have already seen concerning the process of transformation, for we know that complete power reaches its maximum at two points in the cycle, namely at the beginning of the procession and at the end of the reversion. Hence, completeness itself will be the point at which the procession and the reversion are linked. But we must look at some texts and see what direct information we are given.

First of all we should consider the following proposition together with the first line or so of the proof (*El. Th.* 30. 25-29): πᾶν τὸ παράγον διὰ τελειότητα καὶ δυνάμεως περιουσίαν παρακτικόν ἐστι τῶν δευτέρων. εἰ γὰρ μὴ διὰ τὸ τέλειον, ἀλλ' ἐλλειπόν κατά τὴν δύναμιν παρήγαγεν, οὐδ' ἂν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τάξιν ἀκίνητον ἡδύνατο φυλάττειν. This whole passage shows us that completeness, perhaps not

¹ To prevent the discussion becoming unnecessarily complicated at this stage, I refer only to what is frequently termed by modern scholars the 'vertical series' (τάξις) of effects. By this I mean, for example, a series which would run: henad, intellect, soul etc., rather than one which would run: monadic intellect, (individual) intellects, etc. For a brief description of what was probably the full theory cf. *Dodds* 1963, p. 255.

² This concept in many ways provides the link with the notion of ἐνέργεια which we shall have to discuss in considerable detail during the next chapter. There, we shall see that it is the highest form of spiritual motion.

surprisingly, is a state of power. The second sentence clearly implies that completeness is the opposite of deficiency of power, and so it looks as though completeness and the so-called *δυνάμειως περιουσία* of the first sentence are synonymous, both of which are essential if the causal process is to take place. However, we must attempt to make a more precise definition in terms of the four distinct phases in the transformation of power which we distinguished earlier.

Another important proposition links the notion of completeness with the procession (*El. Th.* 28. 21-22): *πᾶν τὸ τέλειον εἰς ἀπογεννήσεις πρόεισιν ὧν δύναται παράγειν, αὐτὸ μιμούμενον τὴν μίαν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχήν*. It is clear from this passage that completeness precedes the procession, again as expected, and so the preliminary deduction about its nature has so far proved to be correct. But we should find some parallel passage in the text which states that completeness follows the reversion. Fortunately, there is just such a passage at the beginning of the proof to a proposition dealing with the question of reversion, which states (*El. Th.* 44. 26-27): *εἰ γὰρ ἐπέστραπται πρὸς ἑαυτὸ κατὰ φύσιν καὶ ἔστι τέλειον ἐν τῇ πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐπιστροφῇ*. The last phrase in this passage clearly implies that the completeness is the result of the reversion, and not simply an accompaniment to it.

It is now perhaps possible to attempt a real definition of this concept, but first we must put the very question about this manifestation of power which was earlier asked about the powers involved in procession and reversion respectively. In placing completeness within the cycle of power, it must be decided whether it belongs to the cause or to the effect. The earlier problem found an easy solution,¹ but we are here faced with a slight difficulty, for if completeness precedes procession and follows reversion, it must be a state arising between the finally complete power (iv) and the initially complete power (i). Of these, the earlier discussion showed that the latter belonged to the cause, while the former belonged to the effect. However, clearly the completeness itself must belong to one or the other.

One hypothesis immediately springs to mind to solve this problem, namely that the completeness involved in the cyclic transformation of power is neither simply of the cause, nor simply

¹ Cf. pp. 65-67.

of the effect, but of the effect functioning as a cause. Thus, effect and cause would be merged, and completeness would appear as a point in the over-all process at which the nature of the former could be transformed into that of the latter. This point would occur between a reversion and a procession, and it would therefore be a link between the finally complete power (iv) of the former and the initially complete power (i) of the latter, the link itself presumably taking the form of a *δυνάμεως περιουσία*. It will, of course, be quite clear to the reader that by uniting the notions of cause and effect in one moment, the completeness becomes not a stage within the cyclic transformation of power, as were the earlier concepts discussed in this section, but an additional stage which links one such process with the next in the hierarchical order. Completeness is thus the key to the whole mechanism of spiritual devolution.

The concept of completeness is also closely related to another notion which has tended to drop into the background during our most recent discussions, for we have been speaking of the procession and reversion of power in relation to its source, yet originally Proclus seemed to understand the mechanism of causation in terms of a triad. The first element in that triad was *μονή*, and we should now consider exactly what this word implies.¹ It bears a striking similarity in meaning with the last term, in that it too is closely connected with the notion of the overflowing of power, except that in this case the overflowing is viewed from a different angle.

During the earlier part of this chapter, when the cyclic transformation of power was being considered, it appeared that there was a certain imbalance in the process, for the first stage belonged to the cause whereas the other three stages were explicitly associated with the effect.² Thus, the first stage seems to be marked off as rather different from the later stages in the process. We must now ask ourselves the question whether the first element in the triad of causation, the remaining, can be associated with this stage.

¹ This concept has been discussed by J. Trouillard, who reveals many interesting aspects. The only drawback of his analysis is that it makes nothing of the connection with the transformation of power which, as we shall see, is the only way in which it can be fully understood. Cf. *Trouillard* 1971.

² Cf. pp. 66-67.

I think that a fairly clear answer is possible in the light of the results so far achieved.

It is very important to consider the passage in which the notion of remaining is introduced and contrasted with that of procession. This passage, which comes from the latter part of a proof, has already been quoted, but should perhaps be repeated here. Speaking of the relationship of the effect to its cause, he writes (*El. Th.* 34. 23-27): ἡ μὲν ἄρα ταῦτόν τι πρὸς τὸ παράγον ἔχει, τὸ παραγόμενον μένει ἐν αὐτῷ· ἡ δὲ ἕτερον, πρόεισιν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. ὅμοιον δὲ ὄν, ταῦτόν πη ἅμα καὶ ἕτερόν ἐστι· μένει ἄρα καὶ πρόεισιν ἅμα, καὶ οὐδέτερον θατέρου χωρὶς. This shows above all the closeness of the association between the elements of remaining and procession, and in fact emphasizes their complete inseparability. We must therefore see if there are two different but inseparable stages in the process by means of which a cause produces its effect, and it would seem that these stages can be fairly easily located.

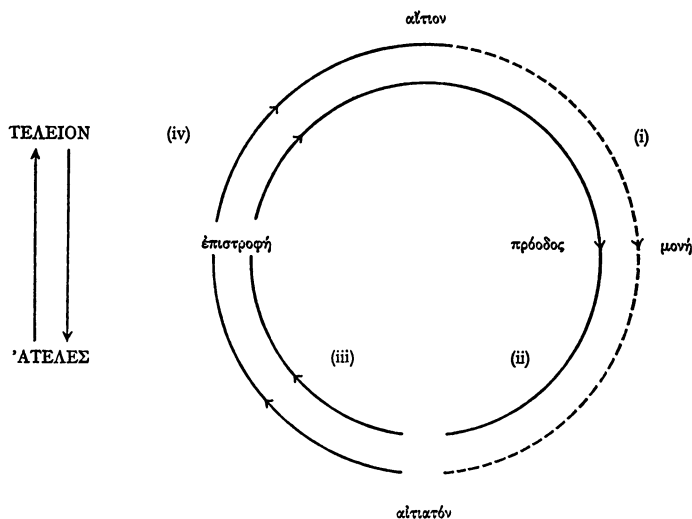
In earlier arguments, it was shown that of the processive power one part, the initially complete (i) belonged to the cause, but one part, the finally incomplete (ii) belonged to the effect. This second stage had to belong to the effect, for it was a basic principle of the system of Proclus that only complete power could give rise to an effect, and so the cause itself could not possibly be allowed to pass into a state of incompleteness before the genesis of the effect begins. However, this would leave Proclus with something of a terminological problem, for although the initially complete power (i) belongs to the cause, while the finally incomplete power (ii) belongs to the effect, he still speaks of the procession as though the entire process were one of the effect. To be consistent, therefore, he had to express in some way the nature of the initially complete power (i) which, strictly speaking, belongs to the cause, entirely in terms of the effect. The only way in which this idea can be expressed is to say that the effect continues to be embraced in the cause for the duration of the stage of initially complete power (i), in other words that it 'remains in the cause'. If this interpretation is correct, we can understand to a much greater extent the true meaning of the words which describe the inseparability of the two stages (οὐδέτερον θατέρου χωρὶς), for the equation with processive power explains how these stages are to be related to one another, namely in the form of a continuum of transformation. There is no exact point at which the effect can be marked off from the cause,

for the transition from complete power to incomplete power is a gradual process in which one stage changes imperceptibly into the next. Such a gradual transition must be the relationship which Proclus wishes to express when he speaks of the concept of remaining.¹

This completes our study of the motion of power. We have attempted to explain the various factors involved in the causal process without bringing into the discussion the important question of the logical roles played by the different phases in the transformation of power. In the case of the remaining, however, it was necessary to move in this direction, for it was defined in terms of the logical categories of identity and difference. In the next section, power will be associated more closely with these logical factors so that the precise nature of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion may be understood.²

¹ Despite the fact that remaining is a definite stage in the cyclic transformation of power, I think that it is still really a static concept in comparison with procession and reversion. In these two stages the effect is in process of evolution, whereas in the first stage it has not yet come into being at all.

² A diagram tabulating the results of the analysis in this section may be found useful:



Broken lines represent the power associated with the cause, while continuous lines represent that associated with the effect. Arrows indicate 'direction' of movement.

(d) *Philosophical problems of the cycle*

In the section before last, we discussed an interpretation of spiritual motion which developed the notion of logical relation in a highly significant way. This interpretation contained a number of valuable insights, but it was felt that it did not probe deeply enough into the question of power. We therefore decided to make our own examination of power to see what further light could be thrown on the matter, and this examination has yielded a considerable amount of very detailed information about its behaviour as part of the cycle of transformation. It has, moreover, made it possible for us to understand properly for the first time a number of Proclus' statements about the nature of the causal process which previously remained rather obscure. In fact, the various remarks which Beierwaltes considered can now be made to yield a far greater supply of technical information. Unfortunately, what this interpreter said on his own account amounted largely to a paraphrase of Proclus' cryptic remarks, whereas what was needed was an investigation of the complex and subtle doctrine of power which underlies and explains these remarks.

Turning back to those passages in Beierwaltes' work which deal with the question of power, we can see how these paraphrases of the original texts can be expanded. For example, when he says that 'das Wirken von δύναμις ist Teilhabe, Verursachung, Verbindung und Einung der Extreme in der Trias',¹ it is now clear how the cycle of transformation permits this causation and connection. Causation results from the transformation of incomplete and complete power, while unification is produced by the continuity of the factor which undergoes the transformation. We can expand upon the ideas in the second of the passages quoted from Beierwaltes to a much greater extent. He observed that 'diese überfließende Mächtigkeit ist in der Ursache auf die Weise der Möglichkeit der seiende Vorentwurf des Verursachten. "Jegliche Ursache hat in sich das Verursachte vorweggenommen, ursprünglich seiend, was jenes entsprungener Weise ist"'.² This connection between the power of the cause and the corresponding power of the effect can only be made fully intelligible in terms of the continuum of transformation between the cause and the effect, in

¹ Cf. p. 58.

² Cf. p. 59.

which the complete power of the former can be held to prefigure the development of the latter. In both these passages, therefore, we find an aspect of the problem which was not explored by the interpreter, and his failure to do so means that the concept of power can never be fully developed in his version of the theory. Of course, Beierwaltes is too thorough to omit altogether a doctrine which we find on practically every page of the original texts where causation is being discussed, but it must be admitted that it is never effectively related to his whole analysis. If this is so, then the interpretation itself must be modified in some way.¹

In the present study, it has been shown that causation can indeed be understood as dynamic identity, but that the logical factors involved must also be viewed as stages in the transformation of power. The two aspects are not to be considered as in any way independent of one another, for in Proclus' system it is the essence of a logical relationship that it also represents a manifestation of power. For example, the logical category of difference is from another aspect the ascendancy of incomplete power, and these two notions are for Proclus quite inseparable. This point is brought home to us in a particularly striking way by the problem which arises in connection with the ἐπιστροφή.²

The reader may recall that in the earlier description of the causal process, in which it was explained in terms of the logical categories of identity and difference, the third of the three terms which normally constitute the dynamic triad was omitted. This omission was remarked upon at the time, and it is indeed highly significant that one of the most fundamental concepts in the whole metaphysical system is passed over in silence in such an important passage.³ Two specific problems must be faced. In the first place, we must discover exactly what the nature of the reversion is, and in the second place, we must find out why this concept was omitted from the description. In tackling these

¹ For some remarks which are not totally inapposite in the present context cf. *Charles* 1971, p. 247. She writes: 'On sait que le thème de la production par surabondance est le premier et difficile obstacle que rencontre toute interprétation hégélienne de Proclus'.

² In the section before last, we were mainly concerned with the elements of procession and reversion. Now we must consider the third element in the triad which, in some ways, provides even more interesting problems of interpretation.

³ Cf. p. 50.

problems, it will be helpful to return to Beierwaltes' interpretation and see if it has anything further of importance to offer.

We have already seen how this writer interprets the relationship between remaining and procession as an example of 'dynamische Identität'.¹ It appeared that this dynamic identity itself was manifested in the form of 'Ähnlichkeit', which is presumably a German translation of what Proclus himself terms *ὁμοιότης*. Beierwaltes is quite correct to emphasize this last idea, for with it we see that something new has entered into the argument. There is no longer simply a dichotomy of identity and difference to contend with, but also a third term, 'similarity', in which he has seen the key to the concept of reversion to lie.²

Speaking of this new term, the author writes: 'Verfestigt sich das Verursachte nicht in sich selbst, sondern strebt immer in die Ursache zurück, um seine wesenhafte Ähnlichkeit zu aktuieren. Daraus wird deutlich, dass der Hervorgang immer schon auf Rückkehr hin ist. Rückkehr ist daher nicht als eine "Umkehr" im eigentlichen Sinne, sondern nur als eine Modifikation des Hervorgangs zu begreifen. Deshalb kann es auch heissen, alles gehe unvermittelt (*ἀμέσως*) aus der Ursache hervor und kehre unvermittelt in sie zurück. *πρόοδος* und *ἐπιστροφή* bedürfen so keiner Vermittlung ausserhalb ihrer selbst, denn Hervorgang ist selbst Vermittlung als vermittelndes, d. h. Sein-stiftendes Wirken der in sich selbst verharrenden Mächtigkeit der Ursache. Der unmittelbar vermittelnde Charakter des Hervorgangs zeigt sich aber auch darin, dass er das Verursachte als ein Seiendes setzt, das sich *selbst* im Rückgang seinem verursachenden Ursprung als dem Prinzip der Vermittlung zu vermitteln bestrebt ist. Im vermittelnden Rückgang wird die Ähnlichkeit, die im Hervorgang die *συμπάθεια* und *συναφή* des Verursachten mit der Ursache stiftete und bewahrte, zum treibenden Element in der Bewegung. *συνδεῖ δὲ πάντα ἡ ὁμοιότης*. So wird die *ὁμοιότης* des Verursachten zur *ὁμοίωσις* in die Ursache'.³ The upshot of this passage, which

¹ Cf. p. 55.

² Beierwaltes sometimes treats the dynamic identity as a tension between *πρόοδος* and *ἐπιστροφή* (thereby reflecting an ambiguity in Proclus' own texts). This interpretation provides an explanation of the latter term, but leaves no consistent function for the *μονή*.

³ Beierwaltes, op. cit., p. 133. The passage which he quotes at the end of this extract is taken from the *Elements of Theology*, and it may well be worth quoting the entire passage which seems to have inspired his interpretation.

is again carefully based on many of Proclus' own remarks, is that just as identity and difference form the basis of the motion away from the cause, so does similarity form that of the motion towards the cause. Unfortunately, he does not elaborate the argument further.

The first thing which emerges from this interpretation is perhaps the closeness of the parallelism between the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion and that of limit, infinity, and mixture. In the latter, we find three elements of which the third turns out to be a combination of the natures of the first two. This is parallel to the situation in the case of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion, if Beierwaltes has interpreted it correctly in associating it with the logical categories of identity, difference, and similarity. The existence of this other triad may perhaps be taken as some confirmation that Beierwaltes' interpretation is correct on this point.¹

The second point to note in connection with this interpretation (and this is undoubtedly the more important one) is that the third of the logical categories involved, similarity, is radically different in nature from the other two owing to the fact that it represents them in a combined form. By positing it as an explanation of the nature of reversion, Beierwaltes has undoubtedly raised a considerable problem for himself, for the result is that there is none of the tension in the motion towards the cause which he argued there was in the other direction. We saw that in the case of the motion away from the cause, there was a tension created between the opposites of identity and difference, and this tension could be viewed as the basis of the motion itself.² However, in the case of the motion back towards the cause, the tension which we should require as the corresponding basis of this motion has been lost, for the polarity is resolved in the combined value of similarity.

(*El. Th.* 36. 5-10) τὸ γὰρ ἐπιστροφόμενον πᾶν πρὸς πᾶν συνάπτεσθαι σπεύδει καὶ ὀρέγεται τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸ κοινωνίας καὶ συνδέσεως. συνδεῖ δὲ πάντα ἡ ὁμοιότης, ὥσπερ διακρίνει ἡ ἀνομοιότης καὶ δίστησιν. εἰ οὖν ἡ ἐπιστροφή κοινωνία τίς ἐστι καὶ συναφή, πᾶσα δὲ κοινωνία καὶ συναφή πᾶσα δι' ὁμοιότητος, πᾶσα ἄρα ἐπιστροφή δι' ὁμοιότητος ἀποτελοῖτο ἔν. This passage contains a reference to the notion of *κοινωνία* which, as we have already seen, is of particular importance to this interpretation.

¹ Cf. pp. 19-20.

² By saying that 'the tension was the basis of the motion itself', I am consciously viewing it in Beierwaltes' own terms. For him there is tension between the remaining and the procession, but (as argued below) no tension in the reversion. However, thinking in terms of power, we find a definite motion in both directions of the causal process.

The only solution is to understand this latter motion in some other way, and this is precisely what the writer has done. In the passage, he speaks of the reversion of the effect as being not literally a circular motion, but rather a 'Modifikation des Hervorgangs', unfortunately not explaining what form such a modification could take. The significance of the substitution is, however, clear enough. In the first place, he has replaced the tension of the motion away from the cause with the progressive change of that towards the cause, and in the second place he has replaced a motion which is only intelligible in terms of the cause and the effect taken together with a motion which can be understood in terms of the effect alone. Beierwaltes does not himself draw these conclusions, and so he does not ask the inevitable question which results: what is there within the effect which changes progressively? There is only one possible answer, and that is power.¹

It seems that Beierwaltes' interpretation of the nature of reversion is quite plausible, provided that we realize that it can ultimately only be explained in terms of power, as we saw in the last section. It is particularly necessary in the case of reversion to probe below the surface of Proclus' remarks, for it seems that an interpretation in terms of logical categories in abstraction from their significance as manifestations of power is considerably less plausible than in the case of the remaining and the procession. Perhaps the result is a slightly anomalous concept of the triad as a whole,² yet this anomaly is a consequence of the nature of Proclus' logical system itself, which must be understood together with its problems and contradictions. Provided that we realize exactly what the full significance of concepts such as identity and difference is, there is no reason why we should not accept the rather useful notion of

¹ It seems to me that to say that the modification which is involved in the reversion is a modification 'of the procession' or 'of the effect', is by no means to answer the question. We must explain how the effect is changed. If Proclus had simply talked about the modification of the effect and left it at that, we might possibly be justified in investigating the matter no further. However, he has a doctrine of the transformation of power which explains what his real intentions are.

² This may be the reason why Proclus does not attempt to explain the nature of reversion in the brief passage which he devoted to outlining the logical functions performed by the cause and the effect. As reversion can only be explained, as we have argued, in terms of the transformation of power, he would be justified for reasons of space in omitting its discussion at that point.

dynamic identity, at least to explain procession and reversion. Indeed, this idea seems to have a very firm basis in many of the remarks which Proclus makes about the relationships between Forms, and seems to be crucial in reconciling the contrarities of the spiritual world in general.

(e) *The hypostatization of the triad*

In this concluding section about the nature of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion, we shall take up a point mentioned briefly in an earlier discussion. At the very beginning of our analysis of this triad, certain premisses were laid down to which we have adhered throughout this chapter. These fundamental postulates were first, that the triad is essentially dynamic in nature (and in this respect it is clearly contrasted with the triad of limit, infinity, and mixture which was considered at an earlier point), and secondly that Proclus' usual descriptions of this triad tend to emphasize its unity as opposed to its triplicity (for he normally employs its constituent elements as parts of the process in which individual effects are hypostatized).¹ In the present section, we shall examine these premisses anew, and see if there are any contexts in which they are not applicable.

An interesting passage from the *Elements of Theology* should be considered in this connection. Proclus argues that each cause in the spiritual hierarchy reflects the qualities of those higher causes to which it is most closely related, this fact being especially true in the case of the triad of Being, Life, and Intellect. The proof of this important point is expressed in the following way (*El. Th.* 92. 5-12): εἰ γὰρ τὸ καθ' ἑκάστην σειρὰν ἀμέθεκτον τῆς οἰκείας ιδιότητος πᾶσι τοῖς ὑπὸ τὴν αὐτὴν σειρὰν μεταδίδωσι, δῆλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ τὸ ὄν τὸ πρῶτιστον μεταδίδωσι πᾶσι πέραςτος ἅμα καὶ ἀπειρίας, μικτὸν ὑπάρχον ἐκ τούτων πρῶτως· καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τῆς παρ' ἑαυτῇ κινήσεως (καὶ γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ πρώτη πρόοδος ἐστὶ καὶ κίνησις ἀπὸ τῆς μονίμου τοῦ ὄντος ὑποστάσεως)· καὶ ὁ νοῦς τῆς γνώσεως (πάσης γὰρ γνώσεως ἡ ἀκρότης ἐστὶν ἐν νῷ, καὶ νοῦς τὸ πρῶτως γνωστικόν). There are several interesting points in this passage, and these should be examined carefully.

We have before us a description of this triad which is in many ways similar to the earlier accounts quoted. However, a somewhat different idea is introduced, namely the more or less explicit

¹ Cf. pp. 51-53.

equation of the three elements with the dynamic triad of remaining, procession, and reversion. Being is here termed the *μόνιμος ὑπόστασις*, that is to say the hypostasis equivalent to the remaining, while Life which follows immediately upon it is described as its *πρόδος*. We find no parallel statement in connection with Intellect, but I think that we may assume that it is viewed as being equivalent to reversion on account of the description of the triad quoted earlier in which exactly this equation was made.¹ The really important thing for us, however, is not the treatment of the triad of Being, Life, and Intellect, with which we have dealt already at considerable length, but with Proclus' attitude to the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion. The coupling of the words *μόνιμος* and *ὑπόστασις* is somewhat startling, and shows us that in this passage at least, the three stages in the causal process are considered to be separately hypostatized, for whatever applies to the first of the three elements must inevitably apply to the other two equally.²

This clear reference to a *μόνιμος ὑπόστασις* seems to indicate that we have here an example of the use of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion in which it is emphasized in its triplicity. I think, however, that it is true that in the majority of contexts in Proclus' writings the unified aspect of this triad is intended to be the predominant meaning. Passages such as the one quoted immediately above are not really very common in his works, and it is probably of some significance that the best example which one can find of the emphasis on triplicity in this case (the passage quoted) contains only two of the three elements. It is possible that when Proclus wishes to emphasize the triplicity of a triadic

¹ Cf. p. 21.

² The triad of Being, Life, and Intellect is one in which the triplicity is normally emphasized. Hence the coupling of these elements with remaining, procession, and reversion, a triad in which the unity is stressed, is particularly striking. The whole passage shows the general flexibility with which Proclus views these triads, sometimes considering the same triad as a triplicity, but at other times as a unity. Another striking example of this flexibility can be found in his description of the 'celestial circulation'. This is the second element in the triad which forms Life, and is therefore termed that which (*Th. Pl.* 209) τὸ μέσον κέντρον κατέχει τῆς ζωῆς τῆς ἀμεθέκτου. The use of the word κέντρον suggests that we are back again with the circle image which Proclus often employs in connection with descriptions of the causing of an effect. In such a context, it would suggest that the unity of the triad is the dominant idea, and yet the celestial circulation is clearly an independent hypostasis. Possibly, Proclus has become entangled in his own etymology at this point, but the passage is still fairly remarkable.

group, he tends to employ the triad of limit, infinity, and mixture in preference.

This apparent limitation on the range of applicability of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion may possibly be the result of the fact that this triad seems always to retain some vestiges of the dynamic orientation implicit in its etymology. Even when the three elements it contains are hypostatized independently of one another, they still seem to convey the ideas of motion and change, and this appears to be especially the case with the last passage quoted, for it spoke of the qualities communicated (μεταδίδωσι) by the different elements within the triad. Being, we are told, communicates the combination of limit and infinity which comprises its true nature to lower causes, while Life gives of the motion inherent in it,¹ for which we are given the reason: καὶ γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ πρώτη πρόοδος ἐστὶ καὶ κίνησις ἀπὸ τῆς μονίμου τοῦ ὄντος ὑποστάσεως. Thus, the nature of Life as a procession from a higher cause lies behind its power to communicate motion to the lower orders. It is, of course, perfectly possible that this remark is merely a piece of ingenious over-subtlety on the part of Proclus, which has been introduced in the present passage to to emphasize the structural continuity of one level of reality with the next, and should therefore not be elevated to the level of definite doctrine. However, it does indeed seem most probable that dynamism is the essential feature of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion, as the names of the constituent elements themselves would suggest.²

With this we must conclude our study of this triad altogether. With remaining, procession, and reversion we are really at the heart of the whole matter of spiritual motion, and any interpretation of the latter must produce a satisfactory account of these three related concepts. That is not to say that we should demonstrate that Proclus is completely consistent in his handling of these concepts, an extremely difficult if not impossible task, but that we should understand what contradictions there may be, and try to appreciate the philosophical reasons which led to them.

¹ I accept the reading τῆς παρ' ἐαυτῇ κινήσεως with Dodds as well as his translation 'inherent in it'.

² On the use of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion to produce the hierarchies of Proclus' spiritual system cf. in particular *Trouillard* 1967, p. 9ff.

CHAPTER FOUR

ACTIVITY

(a) *Circular activity*

This chapter will be devoted to considering a concept which in some ways represents the coping-stone in the structure of Proclus' entire metaphysical system. It does however present us with problems of interpretation considerably greater than those encountered in the discussion so far, and some of our conclusions will necessarily be more tentative. It is often rather ambiguous in application, and we shall need to separate and analyse very carefully the different senses in which it occurs in the relevant texts. Our general method of interpretation will be to relate its sense, whenever possible, to other ideas which have already been discussed and, I hope, clarified.

The concept concerned is that of ἐνέργεια, and it is perhaps best to begin by noting the statement which Proclus makes in the *Elements of Theology*, and which has been considered already in a different context.¹ This passage clearly demonstrates how 'activity' is related to some of the metaphysical concepts previously considered, namely the notions of the procession and reversion of an effect in relation to its cause. The relevant piece of text consists of a proposition and the first part of the proof attached to it, the latter in particular providing some very useful pointers towards the construction of our interpretation. It runs as follows (*El. Th.* 36. 11-15): πᾶν τὸ προῖόν ἀπὸ τινος καὶ ἐπιστρέφον κυκλικὴν ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν. εἰ γάρ, ἀφ' οὗ πρόεισιν, εἰς τοῦτο ἐπιστρέφει, συνάπτει τῇ ἀρχῇ τὸ τέλος, καὶ ἔστι μία καὶ συνεχὴς ἡ κίνησις, τῆς μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ μένοντος, τῆς δὲ πρὸς τὸ μεῖναν γινομένης. This gives us two interesting items of information: (i) that in at least one of its manifestations, activity represents the combination of procession and reversion, and (ii) that in the same context it is equivalent to motion. Each of these points should be considered very briefly.

(i) One of the primary concerns of this analysis has been the explanation of the causal process which is constituted by the triad

¹ Cf. pp. 50-51.

of remaining, procession, and reversion. This furnishes the basis of the hierarchical organization of Proclus' entire metaphysical system, and if activity is equivalent to the combination of these three elements, then it amounts to the primary organizing principle itself.¹ Of course, the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion is a process in which the complete is converted into an incomplete state, and then back into the complete again in a cyclic transformation. May we therefore conclude that activity contains within itself this transformation of the complete into the incomplete? Fortunately the answer to this question is not far to seek, for there is considerable evidence scattered throughout the texts which suggests that this is precisely Proclus' conclusion.²

(ii) The second point follows on closely from the first, for in the passage the combination of procession and reversion is described not only as activity, but also as a *κίνησις*, which suggests that the two terms may be alternatives for one another. Occasionally, we find passages in which Proclus goes out of his way to distinguish activity and motion,³ but normally they are treated as synonyms, at least in connection with spiritual reality.

If activity manifests itself in the way suggested by the passage above, we must conclude that it is grounded in power, for as we

¹ It will, of course, be noted that only two of the three elements in the triad are mentioned in this definition of activity. In the last chapter various suggestions were made about the omissions of elements in these definitions of the causal triad, and the reader is referred particularly to the discussion on pp. 74-78. The entire interpretation proposed in the last chapter is partly an attempt to explain and justify these omissions.

² Proclus appears to think of activity as involving the conversion of incompleteness into completeness in the passage (*in Tim.* II. 288. 6-8): τὸ μὲν γὰρ γεννητὸν καὶ τὸ ἐν χρόνῳ προβάλλον τὴν θείαν ἐνέργειαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτελῶν ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον ὀδεύειν πέφυκε. This example applies to the sensible world, but the transformation takes place equally in the spiritual world, and so there is no reason why we should not believe that Proclus would employ a similar explanation in the latter case. It is important not to confuse this usage of the concept of activity as involving the conversion of incompleteness into completeness with another sense in which he speaks of, on the one hand the incomplete activity of the sensible world, and on the other the complete activity of the spiritual world, for example (*in Parm.* 797. 35-36): ἐκείνη μὲν γὰρ τελεία κίνησις, ἐνέργεια γάρ· ἡ δὲ ἐν τούτῳ ἀτελὴς ἐνέργεια. In this passage, the sensible is viewed as an effect of the spiritual, and so the terminology employed is again consistent with Proclus' normal usage in connection with causal relationships.

³ For example, cf. the definition of activity at *in Parm.* 771. 28-29: καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἐνέργεια λέγεται κίνησις τελεία, which seems to be the basis of the terminology of the passage from the same work quoted in the previous note.

have already argued at considerable length, the causal process can only be fully understood in terms of the transformation of power and of its transference from cause to effect. This deduction is certainly borne out by Proclus' own remarks, and we constantly find him referring to the intimate relation between activity and dynamic factors. For example, in an important passage in the *Timaeus Commentary*, he speaks of the power which the World-Soul requires to produce its activity (*in Tim.* II. 123. 2-8): ἀνάγκη γάρ, ὅπερ περὶ τοῦ σώματός φησιν Ἀριστοτέλης, πεπερασμένον ὄν ἀεὶ λαμβάνειν δύναμιν τοῦ κινεῖσθαι ἀεὶ, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἅμα τὴν ἄπειρον εἰληφέναι, ταῦτόν καὶ περὶ ψυχῆς λέγειν μὴ ἅμα πάντα ἐνεργούσης, ὥς τὴν ἄπειρον δύναμιν, ἀφ' ἧς ἀεὶ ἐνεργεῖ, οὐχ ἅμα πᾶσαν ἔχει ἢ ἐνεργεῖ <κατὰ> πᾶσαν, ἔχουσα ἀεὶ μίαν ἐνέργειαν· πάσης γὰρ δυνάμεως ἐνέργεια μία μιᾶς. We could not, I think, find a clearer statement of the dependence of activity upon power than in this passage, and throughout the remainder of the present chapter we shall constantly explain the various manifestations of activity in terms of the more basic concept. This method of treatment will show that the two concepts are often completely synonymous, although occasionally there are important divergences between them.¹

This preliminary sketch of the nature of activity should have demonstrated the approximate lines on which the rest of the discussion will be organized. It should also have shown the importance of this concept for understanding spiritual motion itself, to which it is often viewed by Proclus as being an equivalent. Thus in a sense, any interpretation of the one is at the same time a treatment of the other.² However, there are certain characteristics which are attributed to activity alone, and it will be necessary to examine these during the remainder of this chapter.

(b) *The concept of ἀναλογία*

Any further investigations into the nature of activity must take account of Proclus' interpretation of the famous simile of light in Plato's *Republic*. This simile exercised a profound influence over

¹ Cf. pp. 96-98.

² Throughout this study, the problem has been viewed as that of reconciling motion and immobility in the philosophy of Proclus. It should, however, be emphasized that the problem is often rather that of reconciling not motion but activity with this immobility, the latter being considered as a possibly less formidable task. It seemed best in the case of this present ana-

all the Neoplatonists because of its application to the Good or supreme principle, and Proclus takes considerable pains to explore its meaning in every detail. In one important respect, his treatment deviates from the original text, for when he says that Plato is employing an ἀναλογία, he understands this term in a special technical sense peculiar to later Neoplatonism, and this determines the general form which his interpretation of the simile takes. We must begin by examining this notion with considerable care.

First of all, the problem should be approached from the strictly metaphysical viewpoint. It is one of Proclus' fundamental doctrines that a lower level of reality is in some way an 'image' (εἰκὼν) of the higher. A particularly interesting application of this idea can be found in the *Euclid Commentary* where it in effect forms the basis of the philosophy of mathematics. Here we see that mathematics reflects the nature of the spiritual world, and that we can learn about the latter by studying geometrical figures.¹ The reason for this is the fact that mathematics operates 'by means of images'. (*in Eucl.* 22. 2-6) ὅσα γὰρ τοῖς ἀτελέσιν δυσθήρατα καὶ ἀνάντη φαίνεται τῆς περὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀληθείας εἰς διάγνωσιν, ταῦτα οἱ τῆς μαθηματικῆς λόγοι πιστὰ καὶ καταφανῆ καὶ ἀνέλεγκτα διὰ τῶν εἰκόνων ἀποφαίνουσι. Mathematical objects are, of course, intermediate between the sensible and spiritual worlds,² but it seems that Proclus is also prepared to employ the notion of an image in connection with relationships which are totally within the spiritual world. In the *Elements of Theology*,³ he makes a threefold classification of reality in which the lower is present in the higher 'archetypally as a cause' (κατ' αἰτίαν ἀρχοειδῶς), each principle is manifested at its own appropriate level 'according to its existence' (καθ' ὑπαρξιν), and the higher is present in the lower 'by participation in the manner of an image' (κατὰ μέθεξιν εἰκονικῶς). In this passage, the notion

lysis to start from the more paradoxical formulation, and then bring in the concept of activity at a slightly later stage. This procedure was, I believe, justified on account of the fact that activity can only be understood in terms of certain more basic concepts which are normally described as 'motions'.

¹ The fact that this idea is used most frequently by Proclus in connection with the philosophy of mathematics will prove to be of considerable significance when we come to consider the way in which he uses the virtually synonymous concept of analogy.

² Cf. p. 60, n. 3.

³ Cf. *El. Th.* 62. 13ff.

of an image is introduced into a situation which could be entirely within the spiritual world itself.¹

The justification behind this doctrine about the relationship between one level of reality and another is not far to seek, and lies in the fact that any image by its very nature embodies simultaneously the characteristics of similarity and dissimilarity. An image is similar to its archetype through the possession of some common characteristic, yet at the same time it must possess the said characteristic at a lower level of reality.² This is what Proclus means when he writes (*in Parm.* 816. 26-28): δεῖ δὲ τῇ εἰκόνι τῇ ὁμοιότητι συγκεκραμένην ἔχειν τὴν ἀνομοιότητα. Moreover, as we have already noted, the simultaneous possession of the characteristics of similarity and dissimilarity is the universal mark of the nature of an effect in relation to a cause.³ It would therefore seem highly appropriate in view of Proclus' general principles to categorize effects as images of their causes.

This leads on to the next idea which we find associated with the concept of an image, that of the parallelism of structure between one level of reality and another, and in this context an image

¹ It should be noted, however, that Proclus generally feels that the concept of an image is not as appropriate for relationships totally within the spiritual world as it is for those between the spiritual and the sensible worlds, for example cf. *in Parm.* 816. 15-17: τὴν δὲ νοερὰν οὐσίαν εἰκόνα λέγειν, ἀπάντων ἐστὶν ἀτοπώτατον. Perhaps we may best sum up the situation by saying that the spiritual world contains images in a strictly relative sense, whereas images proper are confined to the sensible and mathematical realms.

² The inevitably lower ontological status of an image is a result of the fact that it embodies non-being, cf. *in Parm.* 816. 17-20: πᾶσα γὰρ εἰκὼν εἰδωλὸν ἐστίν, οὐδ' ἐστὶν εἰκὼν· τὸ δὲ εἰδωλὸν ὁ Ἑλέατης ξένος ἐν Σοφιστῇ διαρρήδην οὐκ ὄντως οὐκ ὄν προσείρηκεν (continuation of the passage quoted in the last note).

³ It will perhaps be noticed that in the earlier discussions of the logical relationships involved in the process of causation we spoke normally of a combination of identity and difference rather than of a combination of similarity and dissimilarity. In fact, Proclus often thinks of the notion of procession in terms of the latter, cf. *in Parm.* 738. 35-36: καὶ ἡ πρόοδος αὕτη γίγνεται δι' ὁμοιότητος μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνομοιότητος. This should not be viewed as an inconsistency, for the relationship between the two pairs is carefully calculated, and the functions which the pair identity and difference perform at certain levels of the spiritual hierarchy are performed by the pair similarity and dissimilarity at another level. The relation between the two pairs is a result of the fact that identity and similarity together come beneath the συστοιχία of limit, while difference and dissimilarity together come beneath that of infinity. The whole doctrine is worked out at *ibid.* 735. 25ff., to which the reader is referred for further information.

becomes equivalent to an 'analogy'. In an interesting passage in the *Timaeus Commentary*, he describes the relationship between the 'indivisible substance' and that which is 'divided about bodies.' The former consists of three parts according to Being, Life, and Intellect, while the latter has three different but clearly corresponding divisions. He concludes (*in Tim.* II. 139. 30-32): τὰ γὰρ τρία τῶν τριῶν εἰκόνες, ἀνάπαλιν ἐκείνοις ἔχοντα κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα τάξιν. Thus parallelism of structure becomes linked with the notion of an image, and in this we see how close the concept comes to what Proclus considers elsewhere to be a case of analogy. For example, when he speaks of the relationship between the structure of one spiritual order and another,¹ he compares the position of a member of one order with that of a member of the next higher order (*El. Th.* 96. 12) κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ὅλην τὴν σειρὰν ἀναλογίαν. In this case we have a slightly more elaborate form of the doctrine expressed in the last passage, but the most important thing to note is the shift in terminology. The idea of parallelism which was implied through the concept of an image in the earlier passage is now the basis of the notion of analogy.

Not surprisingly, analogy is also based on a relationship of similarity between the higher and the lower, and Proclus speaks of 'similarity of position' (τὸ ὁμοταγές) (obviously treated as a specific example of the general concept of similarity (ὅμοιον)) in a passage which further develops the idea of parallelism between one spiritual order and another expressed in the passage immediately above.² Naturally, here the notion of dissimilarity is also to be understood, a point which Proclus is careful to stress, for the orders must be distinguished from one another to a certain degree. This passage likewise is an expression of his general principles of causation.

Perhaps the most striking example, however, of the use of the notion of analogy is that in which Proclus is perhaps closest to the thought of Plato. This comes in a context where he examines Plato's description of the nature of the Body of the World, and

¹ For the relationships between these spiritual orders cf. *Dodds* 1963, p. 255.

² *El. Th.* 96. 13-22. The close link between the ideas of simple similarity and τὸ ὁμοταγές is surely suggested by the wording of the Greek at this point, and indeed the establishment of such a link seems to be a purpose of the whole passage.

speaks of the analogy or 'bond' (δεσμός) which it contains. What Proclus has in mind is the idea of balance or proportion between the parts, and he obviously lays great emphasis on the concept, for he remarks (*in Tim.* II. 18. 29-30): ἀπὸ γὰρ ἰσότητος ἡ ἀναλογία πρόεισιν, ἡ δὲ ἰσότης τῆς τοῦ ἐνός ἐστι συστοιχίας. Analogy is therefore a notion which is especially close to the nature of the highest cause itself, a fact which undoubtedly served to justify the ubiquity of its use as a structural principle of his entire philosophical system. In this particular passage, it is not linked with similarity as in the earlier examples, but with 'equality' (ἰσότης) which ties in with the fact that Proclus is here thinking of analogy specifically in the form of geometrical proportion, as appropriate to the discussion of the nature of something σωματοειδές.¹ However, equality is clearly a notion of the same type as the others already considered, and like similarity of position can be classed under the general category of similarity.

We have now seen a number of examples illustrating the application of two intimately related concepts to both spiritual and sensible reality, and it is significant that the survey has begun and ended in the realm of mathematics, for it is within this area that the concepts have their most idiomatic application. This is a particularly important fact to grasp in the case of analogy, for the English word has a certain connotation of vagueness. The Greek word ἀναλογία, however, conveys absolutely the opposite meaning, and it is most common in mathematic contexts where it tends to convey the idea of precision. It is important to be aware of this difference when we consider a slightly different application of the idea in connection with the context of discourse.

So far, we have been examining the use of the concept of analogy to explain relationships within reality itself, but in Proclus there is another sense which is equally important from the philosophical point of view. To summarize, he maintains that the structure of discourse mirrors that of reality itself, and that its truth is dependent upon this relationship.² This means, in effect, that a work of Proclus

¹ It is very much consistent with Proclus' general principles that an idea which is conceived in a non-spatial sense as applying to the spiritual world, should become spatial when applied to lower levels. Thus, the notion of equality could be viewed as the spatial counterpart of similarity in the higher realm.

² For a detailed analysis of the structure of Proclus' arguments in his

(for example, a commentary on a dialogue of Plato or a treatise in freer form) functions as a map of the real world with a point by point correspondence between its own constituent elements and those of its counterpart. This usage is obviously related to that in which one order within the spiritual world is said to mirror that of its prior, the only difference being that the context of discourse itself is viewed as taking the place of the lower order. Exactly how this idea works out in practice can be seen from the following passage which explains the form of the *Alcibiades Commentary*. The ideas are, however, clearly applicable to other writings of the same author.¹ (*in Alcib.* 10. 3-14) δεῖ γοῦν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις εἶπομεν περὶ τῶν διαλόγων, ἕκαστον ἔχειν ἅπερ καὶ τὸ πᾶν· καὶ εἶναι τὸ μὲν τι τῷ ἀγαθῷ τεταγμένον ἀνάλογον ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ δέ τι τῷ νῶ, τὸ δὲ τῇ ψυχῇ, τὸ δὲ τῷ εἶδει, τὸ δὲ αὐτῇ τῇ ὑποκειμένη φύσει. λεγέσθω δὴ οὖν κἂν τοῦτοις τῷ μὲν ἀγαθῷ τὸ ὁμοιωθῆναι τῷ θείῳ διὰ τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἐπιμελείας ἀναλογεῖν, τῷ δὲ νῶ τὸ γινῶναι ἑαυτούς, τῇ δὲ ψυχῇ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀποδείξεων τῶν εἰς τοῦτο ἄγουσῶν ἡμᾶς τὸ συμπέρασμα καὶ πᾶν ὡς εἰπεῖν τὸ συλλογιστικὸν τοῦ διαλόγου, τῷ δὲ εἶδει λοιπὸν ὁ χαρακτήρ τῆς λέξεως καὶ τῶν σχημάτων καὶ τῶν ἰδεῶν ἢ πλοκῇ καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τῆς λεκτικῆς ἐστὶ δυνάμεως, τῇ δὲ ὕλῃ τὰ πρόσωπα καὶ ὁ καιρὸς καὶ ἡ καλουμένη παρὰ τισιν ὑπόθεσις. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐν παντὶ διαλόγῳ. There is no need to comment further on this passage which is absolutely self-explanatory, but we should simply realize that the whole philosophy of interpretation takes on a profound significance entirely because of this concept of analogy.²

Because of its enormous importance, it is appropriate to make a few brief remarks about Proclus' philosophy of interpretation. A catalogue of his philosophical writing would reveal that most of it takes the form of learned commentaries on texts rather than of purely original compositions, and we may perhaps classify the texts used for this purpose as follows. In the first place, there are the traditional or pseudo-traditional bodies of material such

commentaries on Platonic dialogues cf. A. J. Festugière: 'Modes de composition des commentaires de Proclus', *Museum Helveticum* 20, 1963, pp. 77-100.

¹ Cf. L. G. Westerink: *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, Introduction, Text, Translation and Indices, Amsterdam 1962, pp. xxxii-xxxiii and xxxv-xxxvi.

² The connection between Proclus' metaphysical theories and his theory of interpretation has been denied (in my opinion at considerable cost) by Rosán 1949, p. 6. For a corrective cf. T. Gelzer: 'Die Epigramme des Neuplatonikers Proklos', *Museum Helveticum* 23, 1966, p. 3ff.

as the Orphic poetry, the Homeric poetry, and the *Chaldaean Oracles*. Little survives, unfortunately, of Proclus' expositions of the Homeric poetry and the oracles, although we are slightly better off as regards the preservation of the Orphic exegesis which fills many pages of the *Timaeus Commentary*.¹ The second class of texts consists of the Platonic dialogues, and should perhaps be further subdivided into two types of material represented by the technical discussions and the 'myths' respectively. The bulk of Proclus' extant works fall into this second main category, and we therefore have plenty of examples of his method of working with these texts.

The main aim in interpreting all this material was to demonstrate the agreement of the various sources as regards doctrinal content, and to do this in most cases it was necessary to seek a level of meaning beneath the obvious import of the language. The result was a theory of the type outlined in the passage above, according to which different levels of meaning in the text were to be associated with different levels of reality. Of course, there is no question of finding a completely systematic approach to the problem in Proclus' writings, and the passage undoubtedly represents an interpretative *tour de force* which could perhaps not apply to any text other than the one concerned. Nevertheless, the basic principles were universal, as he stated categorically (ἐν παντὶ διαλόγῳ).²

This brief sketch will, I hope, provide the background for a full understanding of Proclus' interpretation of the famous Platonic passage concerning the Good. Since the Neoplatonist operates with such a highly specialized and metaphysical form of the concept of

¹ On Proclus' general theory of interpretation and its historical background cf. K. Praechter: 'Richtungen und Schulen im Neuplatonismus', *Genethliakon C. Robert*, Berlin 1910, pp. 105-156; A. Bielmeier: *Die neuplatonische Phaidros-Interpretation, ihr Werdegang und ihre Eigenart*, Paderborn 1930; A. J. Friedl: *Die Homer-Interpretation des Neuplatonikers Proklos*, Würzburg 1936; J. Pépin: 'Porphyre, exégète d'Homère', *Entretiens Hardt* 12, Vandoeuvres-Genève 1966, pp. 231-272.

² Cf. the following studies of Proclus' treatment of specific interpretative problems: F. Vian: 'La guerre des Géants devant les penseurs de l'antiquité', *Revue des études grecques* 65, 1952, pp. 1-39; P. Boyancé: 'Note sur la φρουρά platonicienne', *Revue de philologie* 37, 1963, pp. 7-11; Y. Vernière: 'La Léthé de Plutarque', *Revue des études anciennes* 66, 1964, pp. 22-32; J. Pépin: 'Héraclès et son reflet dans le néoplatonisme', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Paris 1971, pp. 167-192.

analogy, it will not be surprising if the original simile is developed in new directions through the imposition of more complex types of parallelism between the archetype and its image. However, provided that the reasons for the development are borne in mind, the more elaborate structure of the example should not present any real problems of interpretation.

(c) *The simile of light*

What Proclus has to say about the Platonic simile of light is very important for our understanding of his concept of activity, and in fact this illustration reveals some features of the doctrine not discussed in any other texts. The simile itself is only a part, albeit a very important one on account of its obvious Platonic pedigree, of a complex body of doctrine about the nature of light (φῶς) which is perhaps of more significance for the theurgic aspects of Proclus' thought than for the strictly philosophical side, and into which there is hardly space to go in the present connection.¹ We shall confine ourselves to an examination of his interpretation of the simile in which light is used as an illustration of the activity of the first cause, and during this section two passages in which this interpretation is expounded will form the basis for discussion. Both of these occur in the second book of the *Platonic Theology* and cover approximately the same ground. To simplify the discussion, therefore, I shall deal with the two passages simultaneously, hereafter referring to them simply as 'passage (I)' and 'passage (II)' respectively.²

It should be emphasized at the outset that, although these passages are so important for our understanding of the particular concept with which we are concerned in the present chapter, neither actually employs the word 'activity' at all. This omission is particularly striking, since practically every other term which is associated with the theory of causation, for example power or procession, appears in numerous scattered references. The two passages themselves deal with the most fundamental process in the whole metaphysical system, and yet the concept of activity which has been shown to be so important in this process, is omitted

¹ Cf. E. R. Dodds: 'Theurgy and its Relation to Neoplatonism', *Journal of Roman Studies* 37, 1947, pp. 55-69.

² The passages are (I) *Th. Pl.* 90-91, and (II) *ibid.* 97-98.

altogether. For this reason, it is perhaps best to begin by justifying the interpretation of the simile as an illustration of the nature of activity.¹

That the simile does have such an application is made clear by the following points in the narrative. In the first place, it is concerned with the notion of the procession of effects from their causes. In passage (I), for example, it speaks of the light which is the central symbol as 'processive' (προϋών) in relation to its source, and it therefore applies the concept which is concerned with the first half of any process of causation. Yet the simile is clearly also concerned with reversion, for the same light has the capacity to 'complete' (τελειοῦν), an expression which we have already seen to be linked specifically with motion towards a cause. The combination of these two ideas shows that the simile is concerned with the whole causal cycle (procession followed by reversion) rather than with any single part of it, and the name of the whole cycle is, of course, 'activity'.²

Perhaps we should now paraphrase what passage (I) describes as ἡ πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον ἀναλογία τῆς πρωτίστης ἀγαθότητος, in which there is an interesting reinterpretation of the traditional Platonic scheme. The use of the term ἀναλογία should immediately put us

¹ It must be admitted that, inasmuch as activity manifests itself in terms of power, the simile itself could simply be taken as an illustration of the latter. It is in many cases difficult to distinguish the two concepts, as we shall see during the course of the next section, but the main distinction seems to be that when Proclus is thinking of the whole process of causation (procession and reversion of the effect) he calls it activity, speaking of power only when he is thinking of the motion in one direction (usually the procession) alone. The passage which we are about to consider is clearly concerned with both directions. It may be thought odd that the simile of the irradiation of light from a source should be used to illustrate the motion in both directions rather than simply the downward motion to which the image is *prima facie* most appropriate. The answer is that all analogies have their limits, and that Proclus probably preferred to distort the analogy rather than leave out half of the causal process which it was intended to illustrate. I can only find one example in which the irradiation of light is used to symbolize the downward motion alone, and that comes at *in Tim.* I. 390. 12-14: ἤτοι [sc. ὁ δημιουργός] κατὰ ἀπομερισμὸν καὶ ἐλάττωσιν ποιεῖ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ δυνάμεων, ὥσπερ τὸ πῦρ, ἡ μένων ὅς ἐστιν αὐτῷ τῷ εἶναι παράγει τὰ ἐφεξῆς. Here we find the image of fire used to illustrate the idea of a cause producing an effect through the diminution of its own power. It clearly differs from the other examples in Proclus in that (i) it speaks of 'fire' rather than light, and that (ii) it links the image specifically with power. It therefore appears to be a rather unusual case, cf. *Festugière* 1967, vol. 2, p. 257, n. 1.

² Cf. p. 81.

on our guard, in view of the metaphysical implications of this concept, and we should expect to find some notion of structural parallelism if Proclus is going to maintain the normal technical significance of the term. This is precisely what does happen. The basic essentials of the scheme are, no doubt, well-known to the reader, namely the opposition between the sensible and intelligible worlds, the former being presided over by the Sun, while the latter is the domain of the first principle or Good (ἀγαθόν). As the Sun illuminates the sensible world, so does the Good bring 'light' to the intelligible sphere, light thus being conceived in both a sensible and in an intelligible sense. Proclus has certain problems of terminology in this passage, for the original Platonic text works with the dichotomy of 'visible' and intelligible rather than that of sensible and intelligible. However, the later philosopher without hesitation substitutes the second pair. Another slight problem is presented by the fact that the term 'intelligible' for Proclus only applies to part of the spiritual world in the strictest technical sense (that is to say the hypostasis of Being), and so he is forced by the need to explain a particular Platonic text into using the term cautiously in connection with the higher realm in general.¹ However, on the whole we find the structure of the simile approximately in its traditional form.

Passage (II) expands and elaborates the original simile in a more specifically Neoplatonic fashion, and the familiar monadology of the Athenian School begins to come to the forefront of the argument. In this we see how the notion of analogy is going to be allowed to bear its full technical meaning of parallelism between one order and another. The first stage in the exegesis is to interpret the Sun and the Good as 'monads' of their respective realms, and so the contents of the sensible world are viewed as a series suspended from the monadic Sun, while the contents of the intelligible world become a series suspended from the monadic Good, the former monad rendering all things ἡλιοειδῆ by means of sensible light, the latter making all things ἀγαθοειδῆ by means of intelligible light. After this, he takes up the remark in the original text which makes the sensible monad the effect of the intelligible monad, thereby completing the picture of the whole

¹ The intelligible world of the original Platonic text is, of course, equivalent to what we have been calling throughout this study the 'spiritual world'.

hierarchy of reality.¹ There is hardly sufficient space to examine the interesting question of the use which Proclus makes of this doctrine of monads in incorporating it into the interpretation of the simile at this point in his argument, but we should simply note that it is the intelligible light given off by the first principle which pervades all the orders of reality, and provides a uniform bond of causation for the spiritual world.

Proclus' use of the simile of light shows how he intends us to conceive the nature of activity in general. However, we still have to solve the problem of why there is no specific mention of the term in either of the two passages discussed. It may be simply an omission of what he felt to be rather obvious, but it also seems possible that the avoidance of the term is a result of his general unwillingness to apply it at all to the region above the hypostasis of Intellect itself.

We are told that the Good is, strictly speaking, above both power and activity in a number of passages,² and to this idea we should undoubtedly add what we know of his general teaching about the concept of 'providence' (πρόνοια). In an interesting passage in the *Elements of Theology*, he makes a definition of providence which is based on an etymological consideration (*El. Th.* 106. 6-7): καὶ τοῦ γὰρ ἡ πρὸ νοῦ ἐνέργεια ἢ ἐν τοῖς ὑπερουσίοις; ἡ δὲ πρόνοια, ὡς τοῦ νομα ἐμφαίνει, ἐνέργειά ἐστι πρὸ νοῦ. This passage does not, unfortunately, solve all our problems,³ but it reveals that an important terminological distinction must be made. Above the level of Intellect, we must think not of activity but rather of its analogue 'before intellect' (πρὸ νοῦ). The result is that when Proclus comes to consider the nature of the supreme principle itself, he associates it with providence (*Prov.* 7. 10-12): *Nam pronoia (id est providentia) quidem eam que ante intellectum palificat omnino operationem, quam soli bono attribuere necessarium.* The fact that providence is so closely linked with activity demonstrates that, however loosely the term may have been used in earlier philo-

¹ Cf. p. 68, n. 1.

² For example, cf. *Th. Pl.* 118.

³ The definition does not specify how much of the spiritual realm between the Good and the level of Intellect engages in providential activity. Proclus frequently ascribes providence to the henads, but it is not completely clear what the situation is as regards the hypostases of Being and Life, nor indeed concerning the First Limit and the First Infinity.

sophical tradition, for Proclus it bears a precise and unambiguous technical meaning.

(d) *Activity and the continuum of power*

In the last section, we have seen how Proclus explains the nature of activity in the spiritual world by means of a Platonic analogy. It is now time to turn to his more explicit descriptions, and see what further information is added. The present section will cover approximately the same ground as the previous one—it will be concerned with the activity of a cause in relation to a whole sequence of its effects arranged hierarchically below it—but this time Proclus will pursue a direct analysis of the factors involved. We should not consider either of these types of account as being more representative of his real modes of thought than its counterpart, but rather they are complementary aspects of a single line of argument, in which each assists in the comprehension of the other.

The closeness of the relationship between activity and power is emphasized in all the passages which deal with the nature of causation. Certain propositions and proofs in the *Elements of Theology* treat of the process simultaneously in terms of both concepts, for example the interesting passage which has already been cited in an earlier chapter, and deals with the respective functions of the two types of power, complete and incomplete, in the causal process as a whole.¹ Here, we find the statement that (*El. Th.* 74. 9-10) ἡ μὲν γὰρ τῆς ἐνεργείας οἰστική τελεία δύναμις· καὶ γὰρ ἄλλα ποιεῖ τέλεια διὰ τῶν ἑαυτῆς ἐνεργειῶν. The most important thing to notice is that it is power which causes 'by means of its own activities', the whole passage suggesting that power is in some way the controlling factor over activity. In the last chapter, it was shown that in many of Proclus' doctrinal formulations, he alternates between describing an effect as undergoing remaining, procession, and reversion, and describing power as undergoing the same process,² for which the explanation was given that the effect is in its essential nature a manifestation of power. In view of this, it is not surprising that power can have an activity just as easily as can an effect, for power undergoes the cyclic process and reaches completion

¹ Cf. p. 42.

² Cf. pp. 60-62.

at the end of that process in the same way that an effect can be said to undergo the same process and reach its completion. These are just different expressions of the same idea.¹ However, the passage does show a very striking way of expressing the connection between power and activity, and this notion will certainly be worth recalling later on, when it will be easier to appreciate the complexity of the relationship between these two factors.

We must now consider another passage in the same work which develops this connection further. This passage involves certain interpretative difficulties, and it is advisable to quote it in full. It consists of a proposition and proof, and runs as follows (*El. Th.* 54. 23ff.): *πᾶν αἴτιον καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἰτιατοῦ ἐνεργεῖ καὶ μετ' αὐτὸ πλείωνον ἐστὶν ὑποστατικόν. εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν αἴτιον, τελειότερόν ἐστι καὶ δυνατότερον τοῦ μετ' αὐτό. καὶ εἰ τοῦτο, πλείωνον αἴτιον· δυνάμεως γὰρ μείζονος τὸ πλείω παράγειν, ἴσης δὲ τὰ ἴσα, καὶ τῆς ἐλάττονος ἐλάττω· καὶ ἡ μὲν τὰ μείζονα ἐν τοῖς ὁμοίοις δυναμένη δύναμις καὶ τὰ ἐλάττονα δύναται, ἡ δὲ τὰ ἐλάττονα δυναμένη οὐκ ἐξ ἀνάγκης τὰ μείζω δυνήσεται. εἰ οὖν δυνατότερον τὸ αἴτιον, πλείωνον ἐστὶ παρακτικόν. ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ὅσα δύναται τὸ αἰτιατόν, μείζονως ἐκεῖνο δύναται. πᾶν γὰρ τὸ ὑπὸ τῶν δευτέρων παραγόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν προτέρων καὶ αἰτιωτέρων παράγεται μείζονως. συνυφίστησιν ἄρα αὐτῷ πάντα ὅσα ἐφύκε παράγειν. εἰ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ πρότερον παράγει, δῆλον δῆπουθεν ὅτι πρὸ αὐτοῦ ἐνεργεῖ κατὰ τὴν παρακτικὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνέργειαν. ἅπαν ἄρα αἴτιον καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἰτιατοῦ ἐνεργεῖ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ μετ' αὐτὸ ἄλλα ὑφίστησιν.* The passage is perhaps not completely self-explanatory, and so it is best to start our analysis of its content by noting the short explanation provided by Rosán, who expresses the thoughts very well in terms of more concrete examples.² He writes: 'Take, for example, any four existing things arranged in a series of relationships; the first will have the most external power, which it can pass to the second so that the second can pass it on to the third and the third to the fourth; the second, third and fourth will then be the effects of the first. But the second thing will not have this much external power; it will have only enough to pass to the third, but not enough so that the third can pass it on to the fourth;

¹ Even if no distinction between activity and power is apparent in the case of individual cyclic processes, it will be argued that a clear difference between them emerges when the whole hierarchy of such processes is considered.

² Rosán, *op. cit.* p. 78.

thus the third will be the effect of the second but the fourth will not be its effect. Therefore the first thing will be the cause of the second, the third and the fourth, but the second will be the cause of the third only. From this distinction arise two classes of effects: on one hand, the second existing thing in our example will be the effect of the first, and the third will be the effect both of the second and of the first; but, on the other hand, the fourth will be the effect of the first only, and not of the first, second and third, as one might expect if the analogy were carried throughout. In one class of effects therefore, an effect is the effect of everything that precedes it in the series; the lower it is in the hierarchy of power, the more causes it will have, the more dissimilar it will become to its original causes, and the more complex (σύνθετος) it will become, since it is the product of many causes. In the second class of effects, however, an effect is not the effect of everything that precedes it, but its real causes can be found only higher in the series; the lower it is in the hierarchy of power, the fewer causes it will have, and since it is a product of fewer causes it will be less complex and, in a certain sense, more similar to the simplicity of its original causes'.¹

In this passage, Rosán has provided a lucid exegesis of a rather compressed piece of text, and there is very little to add to his explanation. Two points should, however, be emphasized. In the first place, it should be noted that Proclus cannot apply universally the distinction of the 'two classes of effects' of which Rosán speaks, although this appears to be the general aim of his exposition of the theory as a whole. He gives the impression that there will be a continuous hierarchy of effects, and yet according to his own principles there is one point in the hierarchy where the two classes are divided off from one another.² The second point is that Proclus emphasizes the function of activity to a much greater extent than Rosán's explanation might suggest, and this is a point which should be taken up and examined briefly.

If we look back at Proclus' own words, we see that his whole discussion is concerned with the degrees of causal efficacy in the

¹ Rosán's term 'external power' is equivalent to overflowing active power. He also has a concept 'internal power' which we shall consider in Appendix II.

² Cf. *Dodds* 1963, pp. 230-233, and É. Bréhier: 'L'idée du néant et le problème de l'origine radicale dans le néoplatonisme grec', *Études de philosophie antique*, Paris 1955, pp. 266-268.

hierarchy of spiritual reality, and this hierarchy appears to have a dual nature, for it manifests itself from one point of view as a hierarchy of power, but from another point of view as a hierarchy of activity. That it is a hierarchy of power is shown by the occurrence of such words as *δυνατώτερον* or *τελειότερον*, both of which imply the familiar continuum in which the quantity of complete power gradually declines as one moves from the higher to the lower orders of reality, a notion to which we have already paid considerable attention.¹ That it is a hierarchy of activity, on the other hand, is shown by the fact that a completely new form of hierarchical relationship has been introduced, which he elsewhere terms 'extension' (*ἐκτένεια*).² This is represented by the idea that a cause can extend its range of efficacy beyond that of its immediate effect to lower levels of the hierarchy, as shown by the first words of the passage: *πᾶν αἷτιον καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἷτιατοῦ ἐνεργεῖ καὶ μετ' αὐτὸ πλείονων ἐστὶν ὑποστατικόν*. For Proclus, this is really the equivalent of Aristotle's doctrine of the relation between a genus and its species, the difference between the two conceptions being the whole ontological apparatus of cause and effect peculiar to the Neoplatonist. The resulting distinctions between the two logical systems have been explored by Lloyd in a short paper.³ Unfortunately, there is hardly sufficient space to tackle these problems of Neoplatonic logic here, but it is important to note that Proclus, in the passage quoted, envisages the hierarchy as performing a logical function which the straightforward continuum of power which we discussed earlier was not sufficient to explain. This logical function is viewed as being performed primarily by activity.

Let us look at the idea of extension more carefully. Of all the passages which deal with this concept, the majority speak of it in connection with activity rather than in connection with power. For example in addition to the passage quoted, when Proclus is describing the relationship between the paradigm and the demiurge, he speaks of the causality of the former as extending beyond the activity of *ἡ δημιουργικὴ πρόνοια*.⁴ It would be possible to multiply these instances fairly easily. On the other hand, he seems to restrict his discussions of power to the idea of a straight

¹ Cf. pp. 43-46.

² in *Tim.* I. 388. 4.

³ Lloyd 1955-56, p. 149.

⁴ in *Tim.* I. 387. 23.

continuum, and I have only been able to locate one passage in which the notions of power and extension are directly linked. This comes in a discussion of the degrees of causal efficacy which should be attributed to the Platonic γένη. (*in Parm.* 737. 19-25) αἱ γὰρ τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων καὶ γενικωτέρων δυνάμεις ἐπὶ πλεόν ἐκτείνονται τῶν καταδεεστέρων, καὶ τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐνταῦθα γενῶν προδήλως ὁρῶμεν· τὰ γὰρ γενικώτερα πλειόνων κατηγορεῖται, μιμούμενα τὴν τάξιν τῶν πρωτουργῶν καὶ δραστηρίων καὶ δημιουργικῶν γενῶν. This passage is particularly important in that it shows, perhaps more clearly than any of the others, that the problem of extension is fundamentally one of logic. The more universal, it tells us, are more widely 'predicated' (κατηγορεῖται), that is to say the range of their causal efficacy within the hierarchy of reality is more extensive.

The conclusion from all this is perhaps that the notions of power and activity are completely entangled. Indeed, Proclus appears to be able to express important ideas in either form, such an idea being that of extension. Nevertheless, a comparison of the important passages suggests that in this particular case, the notion of activity adds a new element to the notion of the continuum of power which would perhaps not have been present had the whole doctrine only been envisaged in its basic form. This particular topic is one on which much more work could undoubtedly be done,¹ and the brief discussion attempted in the present section has only been able to suggest the complexity of the issues involved. As was noted at the beginning of this chapter, activity is in its way the most problematic of all the concepts which Proclus handles in his metaphysical system, and its most obscure aspect is its relationship with power in the hierarchical formations. It is a pity that the evidence is so sketchy for what is obviously such a crucially important doctrine, but perhaps this very feature is a result of the problems to which the theory inevitably gives rise.

¹ The most important outstanding problem is the vexed question of the relationship between the number of powers (or activities) and the quantity of power (or activity). The basic problem is that the number will be at its maximum in the middle of the spiritual hierarchy, whereas the quantity will be at its maximum at the top of the same hierarchy. Whether these two facts can be brought together is a very debatable point, and Proclus appears to be strangely unaware of the conflict.

(e) *Ontological questions*

In the foregoing pages we have considered the nature of activity as represented by the total cyclic process, and also the combined effect of a series of these processes arranged hierarchically in relation to one another, but so far certain more fundamental ontological questions have been deliberately avoided. During the earlier discussion of the nature of power, it was necessary to ask the question in what sense power might be said to 'exist',¹ and this problem must now be tackled in connection with activity. We discovered that the concept of power had two distinct uses, and it would be interesting to know if activity exhibits a similar variety of senses.² The answer should already be apparent, for there have been two distinct uses of the term in the analysis conducted so far. The first (A) is that in which activity represents the whole triad of causation, while the second (B) is that in which it functions as the third element in triadic formations. We must accordingly examine these two uses, and try to determine them ontologically.

(A) This is the sense in which activity has appeared throughout the present chapter, and if it is equivalent to the combined motion of remaining, procession, and reversion, then any question about its ontological status is tantamount to a question about the ontological status of the combined motion. It will perhaps already be clear what the answer will be. During the earlier discussions, three technical terms were distinguished which could all be translated as 'existence', and of these three terms one could be equated with the first element in a triadic formation, whereas the other two signified rather the triad itself considered as a totality. The combination of remaining, procession, and reversion could, in fact, be expressed by the terms *ὑπόστασις* or *οὐσία*,³ and if this line of reasoning is correct, the obvious conclusion is that in some contexts at least, activity is equivalent to the concept of existence itself.

This idea seems to be expressed in various passages in Proclus' writings, perhaps the most interesting example being one in the

¹ Cf. p. 38.

² And, of course, also the ambiguous state of fluctuation between these two senses which seemed to be possible with power in the same circumstances.

³ Cf. pp. 37-38.

Timaeus Commentary where he discusses 'primary being' (in *Tim.* II. 293. 15-18): καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτως αἰεὶ ὄν ἀμφοτέρως ἐστὶν αἰώνιον, κατὰ τε τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄλλην ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν παρὰ τὴν οὐσίαν). Here, we find an idea which is expressed in one form or another by all the Neoplatonists,¹ and one which shows that for them existence is a highly dynamic concept. This feature of Neoplatonism has been noted by a number of modern writers, and is in some ways the most remarkable feature of the whole philosophical system. One eminent authority, Dodds, has summarized the situation in the following words: 'The representation of reality as a chain of spiritual forces is characteristic of Neoplatonism from Plotinus onwards, and is especially prominent in Syrianus and Proclus. For Plotinus οὐσία is essentially dynamic'.² However, it is perhaps even more interesting to reflect upon the fact that the system is not simply to be viewed as a dynamic one, but as one which is simultaneously dynamic and static, for that is exactly what the equation between activity and existence implies. The terms translated as 'existence' are both (at least etymologically) static terms, and their assimilation to the most dynamic of concepts is clearly a most important example of that combination of the opposing categories of motion and rest which is the subject of this study. Any metaphysical principle exists only in terms of its motion in relation to its prior,³ and this motion is not the cause of its existence, but that existence itself, and that existence itself is the activity of the principle.

One further point should perhaps be made about the equation between existence and activity, and that is that there is absolutely no question of equating ὑπαρξίς with activity in Proclus' philosophy. Recent studies have suggested that precisely this equation may have taken place in the work of other Neoplatonists, and that from this point of view activity may be said to precede existence in its full triadic form.⁴ Proclus is himself familiar with such a

¹ This point has been discussed in the context of Neoplatonism generally in *Witt* 1933, p. 338, and *Dörrie* 1955, p. 69. Neither of these writers, however, considers the matter in connection with Proclus specifically, and both equate activity with existence in the form of ὑπόστασις rather than in that of οὐσία, as in the present passage. Fortunately, the distinction between the two latter terms is unimportant in this context.

² Dodds, *op. cit.* p. 215.

³ Cf. pp. 37-38.

⁴ Hadot has assembled persuasive evidence (from Damascius, "Anonymus Taurinensis", and Marius Victorinus) that such a doctrine goes back to Porphyry.

doctrine, but goes to some lengths to show his disapproval of the whole idea, arguing in the most emphatic terms that activity cannot be prior to existence. For him activity is equivalent to the triadic motion of remaining, procession, and reversion, and only in this form can it be considered equivalent to existence. Existence in the specific sense of ὑπαρξις must inevitably be prior to activity.

(B) The answer to the ontological question is much less clear-cut in the case of the second usage of the term activity, that in which it functions as the third element in a triadic formation. We have already seen an example of this sense in an earlier argument, and it seems to be fairly common throughout Proclus' writings.¹ If we are to produce another instance, perhaps one of the most striking comes in the *Platonic Theology* where the triad of goodness, volition, and providence is equated with that of father, power, and intellect (*Th. Pl.* 281): καὶ διὰ μὲν τῆς ἀγαθότητος τὸ πατρικὸν τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ καταλάμπεται, καὶ τὸ οἶον νοητὸν τοῦ νοῦ· διὰ δὲ τῆς βουλήσεως ἡ δύναμις κυβερνᾶται, καὶ πρὸς ἐν τὸ νοητὸν ἀγαθὸν ἀνατείνεται· διὰ δὲ τῆς προνοίας ὁ νοῦς τέλειός ἐστι, καὶ τῶν πάντων ὑποστάτης.

Can we associate all three existential terms with this type of activity? Unfortunately, there is no explicit ruling on the part of Proclus, and so we must resort to circumstantial evidence. This seems to be overwhelmingly in favour of saying that activity is at least a ὑπόστασις in such formations, for two reasons. First, we have only to compare the present situation with that which emerged with the power in such triadic groups earlier on. There it was noted that power, when considered as the second element in a triad, was described as a ὑπόστασις,² and if this is so, surely activity as the third element in such a group must be interpreted as having a similar nature? In the second place (and this is perhaps the overriding consideration), it would seem to be unthinkable that activity could be anything other than existence in view of all that we have discovered in the present chapter. Perhaps for

The doctrine which he considers is certainly an original and fascinating one, apparently without parallel in other Neoplatonic works, cf. *Hadot* 1961, 1966, and 1968. Proclus seems to be attacking this or a similar doctrine (attributed to unnamed philosophers) at *in Parm.* 1105. 32ff. This important passage has been discussed by Bréhier, op. cit. pp. 260-263, and by *Hadot* 1968, p. 355ff. whose interpretations differ in important ways.

¹ Cf. p. 36.

² Cf. pp. 39-40.

these two reasons, we may consider activity as the third element in a triad to exist in the fullest sense of the term, but it is a pity that there is apparently no direct and unequivocal statement to this effect in one of the texts.¹

¹ It seems likely that Proclus would avoid describing activity as existence in the sense of *οὐσία* in such triadic formations because of the habitual association of this term with the first element in such groups. However, we can only draw probable conclusions, for there is no statement either way on the part of Proclus himself.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOTION II

(a) *Motion and multiplicity*

During the last three chapters, we have been engaged in a rather detailed discussion of the basic concepts involved in spiritual motion. It had become clear that this motion could only be understood as some variety of dynamic logical relation, and it was with the purpose of clarifying this latter notion that the detailed discussion of power, the causal triad, and activity was undertaken. It is now appropriate to return to more general questions, and we have a substantial body of information before us which will enable us to draw some important conclusions.

The most striking aspect of spiritual motion which has emerged is undoubtedly the fact that it always appears in triadic form.¹ Sometimes these triads consist of elements which have a superficially static character, for example limit, infinity, and mixture. Others are more obviously dynamic in conception, and manifest themselves in the form of remaining, procession, and reversion or something on similar lines. However, it is particularly significant that in no circumstances has any form of motion emerged which has not involved the division of a unified whole into some type of triplicity.

The relationship between these unified wholes and their triadic subdivisions has been discussed in the greatest detail by Beierwaltes, and we have already had occasion to refer to his interpretation of spiritual motion.² He summarizes the significance of the triadic formation as follows: 'Die Einheit ist in jeder Zahl als deren Prinzip gegenwärtig, in der die Einheit zwar immer sie selbst bleibt, jedoch, in die Zweiheit differenziert und über sie

¹ Analysis of the various types of triadic formation has been, in essence, the principal aim of this study. In Chapter I, we were concerned mainly with the triad of limit, infinity, and mixture, whereas throughout the remainder of the discussion the subject of analysis was the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion. It was argued on pp. 19-20 that these two triads can be reduced to one another. What we are concerned with now is that they represent cases of the combination of unity with multiplicity.

² Cf. pp. 53-60, and 73-78.

hinausgegangen, jede folgende Zahl gerade durch ihre eigene Einheit von der anderen unterscheidet — bis ins Unendliche. So ist die Einheit, da sie in die Spanne von Eins bis Unendlich als Prinzip der Zahl entfaltet ist, das Einfachste und das Mannigfaltigste zugleich, da sie selbst die jeweilige Einheit im Unterschied stiftet. Das Mannigfaltigste vermag sie deshalb als innewohnender Grund zur Einheit zu fügen, da sie unteilbar sie selbst ist'.¹ The writer is here considering what he terms 'die mathematische Implikation der ontologischen Struktur von Trias', and in so doing brings out the relationship between the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion and that of unity, the dyad, and the triad itself. The latter formulation is very common in Proclus, and has the support of both Platonic and theosophical authority, particularly as regards the role of the dyad.² The whole group is the basis of multiplicity in the spiritual world, for it is in the nature of this philosophical system that multiplicity can only result from the successive division of the unities which arise at different levels of the spiritual hierarchy into triads, the resulting number being a multiple of 3. Such is the structure of the whole of Proclus' concept of the spiritual world, understood from the strictly arithmological point of view.³

Perhaps we should now see what Proclus himself has to say about the relationship between motion and multiplicity which results from this triadic conception. In one passage in the *Timaeus Commentary* he links the multiplicity of the sensible world with higher and more unified causes, for unity gives rise to multiplicity and not vice versa. However unified the effect may be, (*in Tim.* I. 260. 29-30) δεῖ πολλῶ πρότερον αὐτὸ [sc. τὸ αἴτιον] μονοειδὲς εἶναι καὶ συνεκτικὸν τοῦ πλήθους. Of course, the causal process here described is equivalent to motion in its most perfect and fully-developed form. Some other passages go further in describing the connection between motion and multiplicity, and those which deal with the nature of the hypostasis of Intellect are particularly significant. One passage in the *Platonic Theology* speaks of the

¹ *Beierwaltes* 1965, pp. 25-26.

² For the equation of the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion with that of unity, dyad, and triad cf. *in Tim.* II. 223. 22ff. The importance of the dyad is emphasized by Proclus' quotation of the oracle verse δὴς παρὰ τῷδε κάθεται (*Kroll* p. 14), for example at *in Remp.* I. 99. 1-2.

³ Proclus is not completely systematic in his application of this principle, although it will suffice as a general rule, cf. p. 22, n. 2.

unified multiplicity which constitutes this hypostasis, for Intellect has an especially complex structure resulting from the fact that it contains within itself a plenitude of Forms. Motion is expressly linked with the differentiation of these manifold internal subdivisions.¹ (*Th. Pl.* 52) ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν νοήσεων καὶ διὰ τὴν ποικιλίαν τῶν νοητῶν εἰδῶν τε καὶ γενῶν οὐ τὸ ὡσαύτως ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ νῷ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἐτέρως· ὁμοῦ γὰρ ἡ ἐτερότης ἐκεῖ τῇ ταυτότητι συνυφέστηκε. καὶ οὐ τῶν σωματικῶν ἐστὶ κινήσεων πλάνη μόνον οὐδὲ τῶν ψυχικῶν περιόδων, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ νοῦ, καθ' ὅσον ἑαυτοῦ τὴν νόησιν εἰς πλῆθος προήγαγε καὶ τὸ νοητὸν ἀνελίζας ἔχει. The constitution of this hypostasis is described as being an example of the presence of difference² combined simultaneously with identity, and the tension which results creates, so to speak, a lack of equilibrium in the whole complex which is described as a deviation or irregularity (πλάνη).³ This last is the motion which consists of a 'leading-on towards multiplicity' of the intellectual activity of the hypostasis, so that it may be said to have 'unfolded' the Forms within. The verb 'to unfold' (ἀνελίσσειν) is very common in Proclus, and is usually employed in passages where the evolution of a multiplicity from a unity is described.⁴ It must, of course, be remembered that the multiplicity to which he refers in passages such as this is not one in which the individual parts are separate from each other either in spatial position or in temporal succession, for spiritual entities are those which transcend space and time, as we have been emphasizing throughout this investigation. In fact, the totality of the principles which comprise the spiritual

¹ It may be thought that the multiplicity of Forms within this hypostasis is of a different kind to that involving the totality of the spiritual hypostases themselves. Cf. however p. 56, n. 2.

² We shall return to consider the implications of the link between τὸ ἕτερον and multiplicity in Section (d).

³ In at least one passage, Intellect is described as being ἀπλανής (*in Tim.* II. 98. 2). This is not, I think, to be taken as an inconsistency, for what Proclus really wishes us to understand is that the 'deviation' is one which does not disturb the changeless state of the hypostasis itself, which is to say that it is an atemporal and non-spatial motion.

⁴ The reader is referred to the interesting discussion of ἀνελίξεις in the mathematical context at *in Eucl.* 44. 14 ff. Here, the relation between Intellect and mathematical reasoning is considered, and the former is said to 'wrap up' (ἀνελίξεις συμπτύσσειν) in unity and simplicity whatever is projected into multiplicity by the lower faculty. In this case, the multiplicity has an added dimension, but undoubtedly the ἀνελίξεις takes place in an analogous way at higher levels in the system.

world is made multiple by a special type of subdivision. Proclus himself reiterates this in passages in the *Parmenides Commentary* in which he discusses the question of the Forms. The division, he argues, of immaterial entities is really a method of describing the division of the sensibles which 'participate' them (*in Parm.* 866. 16-18): καὶ εἰ αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδος μερίζεσθαι φαμεν μεριστῶς ὑπὸ τῶν τῆδε μετεχόμενον, ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ μερίζεσθαι. Similar ideas can be found in a number of passages in the same and other works.¹

At this point, we find ourselves faced with the concept of non-spatial and atemporal multiplicity, and this may well prove to be highly significant for our present researches. Spiritual motion, we discovered, took place beyond the realms of time and space, and we may be forgiven for perhaps inclining towards the belief that no real criteria were required to explain its presence at all. However, it is now evident that, even if space and time are unnecessary, spiritual motion does at least seem to be concomitant with some form of multiplicity. So far, we have only studied a few passages which seem to suggest this conceptual link, and the next stage should undoubtedly be to make a complete survey of spiritual reality according to the theories of Proclus, and study the occurrences of motion and multiplicity at different levels of the system. This is fortunately not difficult to do, for he has been liberal in the provision of useful passages to consider.

(b) *The hierarchy of movers*

We have already alluded briefly to the way in which reality is stratified by Proclus in accordance with the criterion of motion. To recapitulate, it is divided first of all into two categories, the unmoved and the moved respectively, and then the second category is further subdivided into those entities in which the motive force is internal, and those in which the motive force is external. According to the doctrine of the *Elements of Theology*, from which this classification is drawn, it is the hypostasis of Intellect which is unmoved, while Soul is self-moved, and finally Body is moved by

¹ This idea forms the background to his statement that division is present within Intellect οὐκ ἐγκρυφίως καὶ ἀδιαίρετως (*in Tim.* II. 247. 2-3). We can add to this statement the fact that Intellect contains division in this way only because it transcends the realms of time and space, and so we must understand the contradiction involved in approximately the same way as that of p. 105, n. 3.

external agents.¹ At that point in the analysis, it was noted that our discussion concerned the first of these categories, for this was the one which coincided with that of the self-constituted principles or spiritual reality in general. Since then, we have seen that this category is in fact subject to a highly elaborate form of motion, and an interpretation designed to obviate this contradiction has now been proposed and examined. At this stage, it is worth inquiring whether Proclus has made any other classifications which might tell us more about the relative status of motion and immobility among the 'unmoved'.

There is just such a classification in the *Platonic Theology*. It is by no means complete, but supplemented by some information obtained elsewhere, it can perhaps be made to yield the facts we so badly need. In this passage,² we find a stratification of reality according to motion which is roughly parallel to that quoted above. It describes, in ascending order, the three levels of reality mentioned in the earlier classification, beginning with ἡ τῶν οὐρανίων σωμάτων φύσις, after which is placed the province of Soul, followed in third place by that of αἱ νοεραὶ οὐσίαι. The interesting point about this new classification is that further ideas are brought into a scheme already familiar, namely (i) the fact that all these levels are viewed as manifesting to some degree τὸ ἄτρεπτον.³ In the case of the Heavenly Bodies this amounts to freedom from the coming-into-being of substances in the sublunary world, whereas in the case of souls it results from their mediate status between the 'indivisible substance' and that which is 'divided about bodies', according to the familiar Platonic classification.⁴ Finally, in the case of intellectual substances, the 'stability' refers to the fact that they are impassible and unmixed in relation to inferior orders of the spiritual hierarchy. The introduction of degrees of relative stability at all these levels is very important,

¹ Cf. p. 10.

² *Th. Pl.* 51.

³ The term ἄτρεπτον is commonly applied to the gods by Proclus, for example at *in Tim.* I. 316. 27. We shall say a little more about 'stability' and the gods below.

⁴ The terms 'indivisible substance' (ἀμέριστος οὐσία) and 'substance divided about bodies' (περὶ τὰ σώματα γιγνομένη μεριστή) come, of course, from the discussion of the composition of the World-Soul at *Timaeus* 35A. Proclus discusses the passage in detail in the third book of his *Timaeus Commentary*, cf. *in Tim.* II. 147. 23ff.

and suggests that Proclus might understand such a scale as extending upwards within the category of the unmoved itself. (ii) Above the hypostasis of Intellect, which was the highest level covered by the earlier classification, Proclus introduces the order of the gods¹ who, we are informed, enjoy a higher degree of stability than any of the lower orders, and in comparison with whom the relative stability of all the lower levels is assessed. (*Th. Pl.* 51) *μόνοι δὲ οἱ θεοὶ κατὰ ταύτην τὴν ὑπεροχὴν τῶν ὄντων ἰδρυσάμενοι τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἐνώσεις ἄτρεπτοι κυριώτατα καὶ πρώτως εἰσὶ καὶ ἀπαθεῖς. οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς ὃ μὴ ἔστιν ἐν καὶ ὑπαρξίς.*

This classification immediately suggests that we can make certain deductions, of which the first is that there seems to be a scale of degrees of stability which is directly correlated with degrees of unity. We can assume this because, in the first place, Proclus describes the gods as being stable to a greater extent than any of the lower orders of spiritual reality 'because there is nothing in them which is not unity and existence'. Here, there is a correlation at the highest level between degree of unification and degree of stability, and the word which Proclus uses to describe the gods' existence is especially significant. The term employed is the one which we saw earlier to be most closely connected with unification, namely *ὑπαρξίς*.² It was this term which described the first element in

¹ For a general discussion of the historical background to Proclus' doctrine of the gods, and in particular for a lucid account of their discovery in Plato's *Parmenides* cf. *Saffrey-Westerink* 1968, Introduction p. lx. ff.

² For the use and meaning of the term *ὑπαρξίς* cf. pp. 32-35. At this point, the reader may wonder whether there are not two separate issues involved in this question of the gods' unity. The gods, it may be urged, are indeed unities, yet the whole order of the gods is a manifest multiplicity. This seems to be especially so in the *Platonic Theology*, where Proclus usually speaks of the hypostases of Being and Life in the singular, rather than of orders of beings and lives, and yet speaks always of the order of the gods. We may therefore admit that the gods are individually more unified than lower spiritual entities, but considered collectively is there not a blatant introduction of multiplicity at the highest level of the hierarchy? Dodds, indeed, believes that this is so and asks how a group of henads can be participated by a single hypostasis (*Dodds* 1963, p. 282). This problem may perhaps be answered in the following way: In the first place, for obvious religious reasons it was clearly necessary to integrate a large number of divinities into the over-all philosophical scheme. This, however, is an explanation of the origin of the doctrine of the multiplicity of gods rather than a justification for the particular form of the doctrine. This justification may have been (i) that gods must be participated in groups because they preside over the successive subdivisions which take place within the various hypostases, as we have already

triadic formations, and as such was an appropriate word to apply to the gods, for it was indissolubly connected in Proclus' mind with the notion of unity. The triad, manifesting itself in various forms, comprises the whole of spiritual motion according to our previous investigations, and in this interesting passage about the gods, the writer is clearly saying that they do not move because they are not themselves triads, but the first elements or 'fathers' of triads. In the second place, we can assume a correlation because we know that the hierarchy of principles mentioned in this passage as embodying ascending degrees of stability is also the hierarchy which Proclus usually postulates as exemplifying degrees of unity. The passage from the *Elements of Theology* quoted previously as showing a scale of degrees of unification¹ lists basically the same entities as in the classification of motion, for it tells us that (*El. Th.* 58. 30-32) φανερόν ὅτι πλείους μὲν αἱ σωματικαὶ φύσεις τῶν ψυχῶν, πλείους δὲ αὐταὶ τῶν νόων, οἱ δὲ νόες πλείους τῶν θεῶν ἐνάδων· καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος. The last few words are particularly significant, and show that the main statement exemplifies a universal rule, a fact which is particularly important for it is clear that certain principles have been omitted from both lists.

The second main deduction concerns these omissions in the hierarchical order, for the description jumps immediately from intellects to henads, and we are tempted to ask what the situation is with regard to the intermediate orders of Being and Life. On the principles enunciated, the order of Being should have a degree of unity almost approaching that of the gods, whereas the declension into multiplicity should be increased in respect of the order of Life. (Concomitant with this unity, there should of course be degrees of stability appropriate to the two orders respectively). One passage in the *Platonic Theology* fortunately provides us with the information which we seek, and in this Proclus uses a common alternative terminology for the different orders, calling Being

demonstrated at length on pp. 22-23. The hypostasis of Being, for example, must be associated with three gods presiding over a total of nine subdivisions. (ii) The gods, by presiding over successive subdivisions in this way, to a certain extent provide the unification of the lower orders. It is as a result of the presence of a god, for example, that Being is able to prefigure characteristics of life and intellect. Thus, by unifying the lower levels of the spiritual hierarchy, the gods are by a simple transference of thought considered themselves to be unified.

¹ Cf. p. 64, n. 1.

'intelligible', Life 'intelligible and intellectual', and Intellect 'intellectual' (*Th. Pl.* 181): καὶ τῆς νοητῆς διακρίσεως πλείων ἢ νοητῇ καὶ νοερά, καὶ ταύτης ἢ νοερά.¹ Here, it transpires that each of these orders has an appropriate degree of multiplicity, which exactly confirms our expectations.

That Proclus understands the spiritual world as containing degrees of unity should hardly surprise us, for as Dodds has remarked: 'The correlation of degrees of power with degrees of unity is a natural consequence from making pure unity the first cause. The pyramidal picture of reality which is thus arrived at is indeed already implicit in the Platonic method of διαίρεσις'.² That this hierarchy of degrees of unity is correlated with degrees of stability is perhaps more striking. It should undoubtedly be emphasized that Proclus is not prepared simply to affirm degrees of immobility as such, a paradox perhaps a little too much even for him. In the long classification of motion which we discussed above, it may be recalled that he spoke not of immobility but of stability, no doubt in the belief that the expression τὸ ἄτρεπτον was one which could more easily be adapted to a scale of degrees. Indeed, if we turn to another important passage in which this sort of scheme is implied, we find Proclus resorting to an ingenious compromise solution. This comes from a section of the *Cratylus Commentary* in which different levels are distinguished within the category of Intellect, the property of one of these levels being that of simultaneous motion and immobility. (*in Crat.* 59. 9-11) πᾶς νοῦς ἢ ἔσθηκε, καὶ ἔστιν νοητὸς τότε ὡς κρείττων κινήσεως, ἢ κινεῖται, καὶ ἔστιν νοερός τότε, ἢ ἀμφοτέρω, καὶ ἔστιν τότε νοητὸς ἅμα καὶ νοερός. This passage furnishes us with an example of how Proclus is prepared to achieve continuity of structure between the different levels of the spiritual world by the process of establishing intermediate characteristics from combined contraries. The reason for pursuing this line in connection with motion may well have been reflection upon the presence of degrees of unity in his system which, as we have argued, might give rise to corresponding levels of stability.

Presented with what appears to be fairly clear evidence that in

¹ For the origins of this terminology, cf. J. Pépin: 'Une curieuse déclaration idéaliste du "De Genesi ad litteram" (XII, 10, 21) de saint Augustin, et ses origines plotiniennes (Enn. V, 3, 1-9, et V 5, 1-2)', *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 34, 1954, pp. 373-400.

² Dodds, *op. cit.* p. 233.

Proclus' system the incidence of motion is directly related to the degree of unification possessed by the various hypostases, we shall soon be forced to ask the question whether this new fact in any way contradicts the impressions which were gained at an earlier stage of our discussion. The perceptive reader may well have suspected that the analysis pursued in the present chapter might conflict with the hypothesis put forward at a much earlier stage in the argument, and so we must devote the whole of the next section to considering a possible objection on these grounds. In this context, it will be necessary to pay attention to the views of some influential scholars who have produced arguments based on a similar line of thought, for these also might damage our basic argument about the interpretation of the concept of spiritual motion.

(c) *An objection considered*

We must state the problem with which we are now faced quite clearly. Early in the discussion it was suggested that the motion attributed by Proclus to spiritual entities could best be understood as dynamic logical relation, and therefore required to be considered as to some degree present in a mind.¹ In the last section, however, certain new facts were revealed which suggest that motion may in some way be connected with the incidence of multiplicity at different levels of the spiritual hierarchy. Is it not likely that some conflict will result between on the one hand the idea that the motion of logical relation cannot be held to take place above the realm of Intellect which provides it with its essential basis, and on the other hand the idea that the motion of multiplicity extends to some degree at least up to the level of Being, at which point its last vestiges begin to be obliterated in the unified stability of the gods? In short, if we must admit that there is a type of motion which is higher in the order of reality than the motion of logical relation, then our interpretation of the motion of all the spiritual or self-constituted entities in such terms will be undermined.

The idea of a motion which takes place above these limits has been the force behind an objection to the reduction of all spiritual motions to dynamic logical relation reported by Trouillard

¹ Cf. pp. 15-16.

in an interesting discussion of the idea of causality in Proclus' philosophy. In the course of his analysis, he compares the notion of causality found in Plotinus, and mentions a point made earlier in this connection by Bréhier. Speaking of the procession of lower hypostases from the One, he writes: 'Ce n'est pas une nécessité logique, puisque la procession, comme le remarquait Bréhier, exclut toute dialectique descendante à partir du Bien, puisque l'Un ne contient pas l'idée des êtres'.¹ If some elaboration on this point may be permitted, we could say that processions from Intellect may be viewed as logical relation, but any higher process must transcend the level of reality to which such explanations are normally appropriate. This particular objection will furthermore have added force in the case of Proclus who, unlike Plotinus, postulates a whole range of principles above Intellect.

It may well be clear already from what has been said that the present writer does not consider this objection to be a very serious one. At an earlier point in the analysis, we attempted to show how the various entities which comprise the spiritual world are related to one another and how, in particular, the notion of mutual interpenetration prevented us from considering one hypostasis as completely separate from other hypostases immediately prior and posterior to it in the order of procession.² To summarize the results achieved there very briefly, we may perhaps say that the three hypostases of Being, Life, and Intellect form a single triad which, according to Proclus' normal principles, is equally a unity and a triplicity.³ Further, the interpenetration of each of these hypostases with the others is achieved as a result of the fact that each one is subdivided into triads which mirror the structure of the whole group, and so Being possesses within itself elements of life and intellect 'after the manner of a cause', while Life possesses within itself an element of being 'by participation' and an element of intellect 'after the manner of a cause', and finally Intellect possesses within itself elements of being and life 'by participation'. Furthermore, the exact natures of these hypostases determine the character of their configuration, for it is perhaps inevitable that

¹ Trouillard, *Revue des sciences religieuses* 32, 1958, p. 348. The passage shows by its reference to 'toute dialectique descendante à partir du Bien' that it is concerned with logical relation in its dynamic form.

² Cf. pp. 17-18.

³ For secondary material dealing with this problem cf. p. 21, n. 1.

a relationship of interpenetration between Intellect and Being will be dominated by the former as the richer of the two concepts.¹ Some writers have argued that Proclus has broken up the unity of the Plotinian hypostasis of Intellect, but it is hoped that the results of the present researches have shown that this verdict is quite unjustified, and that Proclus is more self-consciously concerned with the search for unity than his predecessor.² Admittedly, the later philosopher is perhaps thinking in terms of continuity rather than unity, yet clearly continuity is a very valid form of unity.

Some writers, perhaps more perceptive than the last group, have realized that there is no clear dichotomy between Being and Intellect, for example Pépin, in an important article which has now become something of a classic as far as the study of the later Neoplatonic system of noetics is concerned. However, even this writer goes on from this to infer that the lack of such a clear division is a result of imprecise philosophical thinking rather than deliberate and calculated policy, and that Proclus is inconsistent and vacillating in his treatment of the structure of spiritual reality.³ He takes some examples from the *Platonic Theology*, and draws the following conclusions about Proclus' treatment of Intellect: 'On comprend dès lors que, dissociant les Idées du démiurge et le νοῦς de l'être, Proclus n'ait pu maintenir l'identité plotinienne entre l'intelligence et l'intelligible. Il nie que l'objet intelligible, aliment de l'intelligence, lui soit soudé (τῶν νοητῶν οὐχ ὡς τῷ νοῦ συντεταγμένων) et n'en soit séparable que par abstraction. Mais, sur ce point encore, sa position manque de netteté: l'intelligible subsiste en soi, séparément de l'intelligence, sans cesser pour autant de demeurer en elle (καὶ οὕτως ἅμα μὲν ἐξήρηται τοῦ νοῦ τὸ νοητὸν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ ὑπάρχον, ἅμα δὲ οὐκ ἔξω τοῦ νοῦ τὸ νοητόν). Une telle ambiguïté était d'ailleurs classique, et Proclus la lisait dans les *Oracles chaldaïques*, qui simultanément enjoignent

¹ The terminology νοητόν, νοητὸν καὶ νοερόν, νοερόν might encourage this.

² On the controversy about the relationship between Being and Intellect in general up to the time of Proclus cf. the following studies: J. Pépin, op. cit.; J. Trouillard: 'Âme et esprit selon Proclus', *Revue des études augustiniennes* 5, 1959, pp. 1-12; A. H. Armstrong: 'The Background of the Doctrine "That the Intelligibles are not Outside the Intellect"', *Entretiens Hardt* 5, Vandoeuves-Genève 1960, pp. 391-425.

³ J. Pépin: 'Éléments pour une histoire de la relation entre l'intelligence et l'intelligible chez Platon et dans le néoplatonisme', *Revue philosophique* 146, 1956, pp. 39-64.

de tendre l'indigente intelligence vers l'intelligible qui subsiste hors d'elle, et enseignent que l'intelligible n'a pas d'existence séparée de l'intelligence. Il est néanmoins possible d'introduire quelque clarté dans la doctrine de Proclus sur la relation entre le νοῦς et le νοητόν en envisageant plusieurs niveaux'.¹ In the face of criticism such as this, we are perhaps tempted to reply that the much vaunted 'ambiguïté' is to be understood as the essential mode of operation of the triadic principle. This principle is intimately connected with the idea of achieving continuity in the spiritual procession by means of a system of interpenetrations and predominances which leads to the multiplication of spiritual levels so characteristic of the Athenian School of Neoplatonism. It should be clear above all that Proclus, although in some passages he affirms the identity of Intellect and its intelligibles while in other passages distinguishing them,² is not in any way to be held guilty of inconsistency, for in so doing he is merely drawing the logical conclusion which results from the application of a system of deliberate structural principles at different levels of the spiritual hierarchy. On the contrary, it might be far more justifiable to complain that the too easily achieved consistency resulting from the application of this method is fundamentally the main weakness of his whole philosophy.

If we may be permitted to summarize what is probably Proclus' position we could perhaps say that, contrary to the opinion of Pépin, he is quite consistent in his working-out of the doctrine of Intellect, and that this hypostasis is a significant spiritual force far beyond the relatively limited range of the actual position it occupies according to predominance³ in the procession. This means, of course, that the intellectual motion could be considered the dynamic element in the spiritual world *par excellence*, and this does in fact seem to be exactly the way in which Proclus views the matter. If this line of reasoning is correct, as the present author believes that it is, then the objection which was raised at the beginning of this section will not be too damaging, at least in the case of Proclus,⁴ and there is no reason why we should

¹ Pépin, *op. cit.* pp. 60-61. In this passage the writer quotes from two passages, *Th. Pl.* 247, and (the longer passage) *Th. Pl.* 172.

² When Proclus refers to 'intelligibles' in such a context he means, of course, the Forms.

³ Cf. p. 18.

⁴ The original objection, it will be remembered, applied to Plotinus.

not project the notion of dynamic logical relation as far as the order of the gods itself. Thus, there is no need to distinguish the motion of multiplicity from the motion of logical relation, and all the discussion of the correlation between motion and multiplicity may simply be taken as confirmation of the basic thesis.

Whether the philosopher himself ever consciously considered this question of the relationship between spiritual motion so conceived and multiplicity is by no means easy to determine. The lengthy classification of movers examined in some detail during the last section, and which we saw to imply a careful and deliberate correlation between motion and multiplicity, suggests that he did, for if our interpretation of Proclus' meaning is correct, the motion of the higher principles must be understood as that of logical relation. The general association of multiplicity and motion was, indeed, one of the most common tacit assumptions on the part of Greek philosophers of all periods, the Neoplatonists included. What the Neoplatonists seem to have done is to associate multiplicity in a special sense¹ with the motion of logical relation, and this fascinating conception is formulated in the most striking way in Proclus.

(d) *Multiplicity and difference*

In the first chapter of the present work, it was suggested that spiritual motion should be interpreted as dynamic logical relation, and most of the discussion which followed was directed towards clarifying this important notion in Proclus' philosophical system. The starting-point for this whole investigation was reflection upon Proclus' understanding of *ἐτερότης*, which seemed to play a most vital role in the logical articulation of the whole system, and this fact was later borne out in the most spectacular way during the study of the causal triad.² In the present chapter, however, it has been shown that the association of spiritual motion with multiplicity is also of great importance in Proclus' thinking. Despite some initial doubts, it has become clear that these two ways of understanding spiritual motion are not necessarily incompatible. In this final section we shall go further and suggest that they actually imply each other.

¹ Cf. p. 106, n. 1.

² Cf. pp. 50-51.

The very interesting passage from the *Platonic Theology* which we have already quoted dealing with the nature of motion within the hypostasis of Intellect is particularly relevant in this connection.¹ It described the internal noetic motion or irregularity (πλάνη), and this motion, it will be remembered, was linked with the presence of difference within the hypostasis. The result was the declension into multiplicity of the intelligible objects. This passage then, seems to suggest that the basis of multiplicity is none other than the category (γένος) of difference, and there is considerable evidence that this is not a casual utterance on Proclus' part, for he seems to say exactly the same thing in a number of other passages in his works. In the *Parmenides Commentary*, for example, we find a particularly explicit formulation of the doctrine in which identity is described as the cause of unity, and difference as the cause of multiplicity ((in *Parm.* 738. 9-12): ἡ μὲν ταυτότης ἐνοποιός ἐστιν, ἡ δὲ ἐτερότης ἀλλοποιός καὶ πλῆθους αἰτία πᾶσιν οἷς ἂν παραγένηται. We could not hope to find any more decisive statement, and the thoughts which it contains are not without echo elsewhere.²

These passages show that the association of spiritual motion with difference is ultimately the same thing as its association with multiplicity, for the three concepts are so intimately involved with one another. Thus it would seem that the investigation pursued in the present section is simply the study of yet another aspect of the doctrine which we were considering earlier. Both aspects are undoubtedly of equal importance, and each complements the other. Furthermore, it is only when we have appreciated the problem from these two distinct viewpoints that our understanding of spiritual motion in this philosophy is really complete.³

When we reflect upon the nature of this doctrine, we are made most aware of the connection between Proclus and Hegel. There is no space in the present context to consider this relationship

¹ Cf. p. 105.

² The Platonic γένος does not, of course, comprise the whole function of difference for Proclus. Cf. *Th. Pl.* 227.

³ In the earlier analysis of the problem, we associated the concept of difference with δύναμις, a connection which caused us to embark on the long discussion of Chapters II-IV. In this chapter, however, we have linked difference with multiplicity. It will be clear to a perceptive reader that power and multiplicity are also linked, and that both are integral to the process of triadic spiritual evolution. The essential link between power and multiplicity is normally expressed by one word in Proclus, πολλαπλασιάζειν, which is usually combined with a reference to power, cf. *El. Th.* 32. 8, etc.

in any detail, and although there are great and crucial differences between the ancient and the modern philosopher, Beierwaltes is surely justified in emphasizing the 'Geistesverwandtschaft' ¹ between them. It is when we think of Proclus' treatment of concepts such as identity and difference, and of the dialectical motion implicit in the triadic formation that the link is most obvious. At a more subtle level, we may compare the way in which both philosophers conceive of the nature of subjective objectivity as the noetic basis of their systems. The differences between the two philosophers are, of course, not to be ignored, and some of these have already been noted in the text and footnotes of the present work.²

With this, our study of spiritual motion is ended, and it is hoped that Proclus' understanding of this difficult concept is by now reasonably clear. I believe that the texts which have been assembled for analysis show that there is a definite and perfectly intelligible doctrine of spiritual motion, and that there has been a genuine attempt to overcome all the paradoxes and contradictions which such a concept must inevitably entail. The present author has made absolutely no attempt to minimize these contradictions which are undoubtedly considerable. It remains to consider a few general points which may perhaps complete the picture of this important doctrine of Proclus, and we should note briefly in conclusion how this philosopher's concept of spiritual motion is an advance over that of his immediate predecessors.

¹ W. Beierwaltes: 'Hegel und Proklos', *Hermeneutik und Dialektik* (Festschrift Gadamer), Tübingen 1970, p. 243.

² For discussions of the relationship between these two thinkers cf. (in addition to the above which contains a short bibliography) A. E. Taylor: 'The Philosophy of Proclus', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 18, 1918, p. 605ff.

CONCLUSION

At the very outset of this investigation, two important questions were raised. In the first place, we asked why spiritual motion should be chosen as a subject of inquiry, and in the second place, we asked why it should be studied specifically in the case of Proclus. In the Introduction, an attempt was made to answer both of these questions in brief, and it is hoped that all the discussions which have followed may be held to have confirmed the viewpoints expressed. There is perhaps little more to be said on the first question, for the magnitude and importance of the problem of spiritual motion in the later Neoplatonic metaphysical system has been no doubt emphasized, even perhaps at tedious length, in our main argument. However, the reader may possibly feel that something further could be said on the other question.

In short, what is the special significance of Proclus' doctrine of spiritual motion? We have already sketched briefly the nature of the origins and development of the concept of spiritual motion in Neoplatonism generally, and noted its dependence upon ideas derived from Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics.¹ We have alluded to the Plotinian version of the theory, and to the problems or contradictions which seem to be inherent in his approach to the matter.² Plotinus was chosen as the example because his version of the doctrine is the most well-documented which we have coming from the period before Proclus, his ideas being accessible to us in a number of impressive treatises. Of Porphyry, even after the monumental labours of Hadot,³ we know comparatively little. This scholar has, by means of the painstaking comparison and careful interpretation of a number of passages in the writings of the Christian theologian Marius Victorinus, in the anonymous Turin Palimpsest discovered during the last century,⁴ and finally in the fragmentary remains of Porphyry himself, presented a new picture of this philosopher, who emerges as an important

¹ Cf. pp. 3-5.

² Cf. pp. 2-3.

³ Cf. *Hadot* 1968.

⁴ Cf. W. Kroll: 'Ein neuplatonischer Parmenidescommentar in einem Turiner Palimpsest', *Rheinisches Museum*, 47, 1892, pp. 599-627.

thinker in his own right, and not simply the writer of anti-Christian polemic and the editor of the works of his teacher Plotinus, as previously believed.¹ However, many of the results of these researches must be considered tentative because of the limited range of the evidence, and so this philosopher who appears to have contributed much to the development of Neoplatonism still remains a somewhat shadowy figure. This is even more so in the case of Iamblichus, in whose case the lack of information is particularly to be regretted since he appears to have originated many of the doctrinal tendencies which manifest themselves in the speculations of the Athenian School.² It is to be hoped that the work at present being undertaken in connection with Iamblichus' fragments will help to put this philosopher in his true and deserved historical perspective.³ Finally, on Syrianus whom Proclus reverently styles ὁ ἡμέτερος καθηγερμών, hardly any scholarly work has been done, and it would be of enormous assistance to us if we could have his precise relation to Proclus clarified, but here again the remains are scanty.

In this state of affairs, we are left with two main bodies of writing to give us our information about Neoplatonic doctrine, the works of Plotinus and Proclus.⁴ In attempting to assess the contribution of the latter to the development of the concept of spiritual motion, we can therefore do no better than to compare his formulation of the theory with that of his predecessor. Such a comparison reveals a radical difference of approach between the two philosophers, but we should always bear in mind the fact that much of this difference results from innovations on the part of intermediate figures, in some cases recorded, in others not.⁵

¹ I make no mention of the admirable work also done by Bidez, Dörrie and others in this field.

² Cf. *Praechter* 1910; J. Bidez: 'Le philosophe Jamblique et son école', *Revue des études grecques* 32, 1919, pp. 29-40.

³ An edition is at present being prepared by J. M. Dillon.

⁴ Excluding the *Dubitaciones et Solutiones* of Damascius which presents doctrines similar to those found in Proclus' writings, and covers approximately the same ground as the *Platonic Theology* and *Elements of Theology*.

⁵ Much of the detail which is preserved about these intermediate figures comes from citations in the writings of Proclus. The commentaries (particularly the *Timaeus Commentary*) are extremely useful in this respect, and we can see in many cases exactly what the reaction to their views on the part of Proclus is. In any survey of this period, one should not of course overlook the importance of the *Chaldaean Oracles*.

It is, I think, fair to say that the first and last parts of this study would have been written in approximately the same way if my subject had been spiritual motion in the philosophy of Plotinus. The exact hierarchical structure of the intelligible or spiritual world would have been different of course, but in essence the respective answers of the two philosophers about the general nature of this motion would probably have been very similar. Both, I believe, would have interpreted it as dynamic logical relation in the way suggested. It is in the central part of the present study where the real differences of approach between the two philosophers are most clearly shown, and these differences seem to fall into two categories. These are concerned with what I shall term the 'horizontal' and the 'vertical' planes respectively of the spiritual motion.¹

The nature of the horizontal plane can perhaps best be explained by the use of a metaphor. It seems clear to the present writer that Proclus understands spiritual motion as manifesting itself in 'cinematic' terms. Where Plotinus speaks of the single motion of Intellect in relation to the One, Proclus attempts to reveal the precise nature of this continuity by dividing the motion into a number of stages in themselves static, each of which embodies a small degree of change in relation to the previous one. It might thus be compared with a succession of still photographs joined together to produce a moving film.² This type of process governs the hypostatization of the primal triad of Being, Life, and Intellect, and all the other triadic formations which we have considered in the course of our investigations. The explicit formulation of this interesting notion of spiritual procession is normally attributed to Iamblichus, and is therefore a peculiar trait of the post-Plotinian type of Neoplatonism. Dodds has commented: 'Spiritual continuity means that the qualitative interval between any term of the procession and its immediate consequent is the minimum difference compatible with distinctness'.³ Perhaps the most important

¹ I am conscious of the danger of employing such spatial metaphors as 'horizontal' and 'vertical'. My justification is that Proclus' own analyses are frequently tinged with spatial imagery in some form.

² The metaphor is taken from H. D. P. Lee who uses the term 'cinematographic' in connection with Zeno's interpretation of motion. I find this idea in some ways parallel to the Neoplatonic one, cf. H. D. P. Lee: *Zeno of Elea*, a Text with Translation and Notes, Cambridge 1936, p. 105.

³ *Dodds* 1963, p. 216.

thing to grasp about this process is that there is no question here of Proclus having to connect a number of distinct principles by a law of continuity, but on the contrary, the problem is rather to separate the phases of a single process in order to make the exact nature of the process more readily understood. Plotinus had merely postulated such a process of spiritual evolution in his philosophy, but it was the task of later thinkers to describe how this process took place. Their solution is represented by Proclus' doctrine of spiritual motion.

The other plane on which spiritual motion manifests itself is a vertical one, and by this I mean the stratification of the process of causation into a kind of infrastructure of power, an intermediate structure of remaining, procession, and reversion, and a superstructure of activity. Power, as we observed, was the most basic of Proclus' metaphysical concepts, and it was in terms of this that the causal triad had ultimately to be understood. Activity in its turn comprised the totality of the process itself. All these terms were known to Plotinus and employed by him to describe aspects of the process in which one hypostasis was enabled to give rise to its consequent, but he had employed the terms rather loosely. It was therefore up to his successors to crystallize this terminology into a technical vocabulary. In the course of our analyses, an attempt was made to show how this terminology functions, and perhaps the main claim of the present work to originality lies in its treatment of these very concepts. The relationship, for example, between power and reversion does not seem to have been grasped sufficiently in the past, and many writers have treated power in Proclus almost as though it were nothing more than the traditional Aristotelian concept, given certain modifications necessary to accommodate its nature to the demands of the spiritual world. Similar misunderstandings have vitiated the interpretation of the concepts of remaining, procession, reversion, and activity. This vertical systematization of the doctrine of power seems also to have originated at some stage in the post-Plotinian period, but the exact nature of its origins and development is not completely clear.

These then are the main features of Proclus' theory of spiritual motion which serve to distinguish his concept from that of his predecessor. However, before concluding we should perhaps ask one question. What was the motivation behind these two innova-

tions? This is, of course, a very broad and general question, and one which perhaps takes us right out of the realm of scholarly studies proper. To answer it, we must understand the psychology of the philosophical and religious thinkers of this particular period of late Antiquity, by no means an easy task. The present author can perhaps only make a tentative and humble suggestion. Perhaps one might say that in the work of Proclus we see a subconscious attempt to rationalize in the scientific manner various doctrines which are most appropriate within the context of mystical intuition. The simultaneous affirmation of opposites or contradictories is one of the most characteristic traits of the mystical mind, and one can observe it in thinkers far apart from one another in both chronology and geography. The polarity of motion and rest with which we have been concerned is only one of these contradictory pairs, but undoubtedly a very important example. The mystic will sense both stability and eternity in the highest being, but at the same time he will conceive it as a vital and hence moving force. As a mystical intuition, such a polarity defies fully rational explanation, and it was perhaps the failing of Proclus and others of similar persuasion that they could not, or would not accept this, for their faith in the power of reason was too great. To this extent, perhaps Proclus was attempting to explain the inexplicable, a fact which may account for the just vaguely detectable air of desperation which pervades his speculations. However, for anyone interested in both the mystical and the rational modes of thought, such a *rapprochement* between the two, as one finds perhaps uniquely in the work of this Neoplatonist, cannot fail to be a source of fascination.

APPENDIX I

ἔρως as a cosmic process

In the foregoing discussions, we have considered all the main concepts associated with Proclus' doctrine of spiritual motion. However, one concept not so far investigated seems to play a very important role in this process, although it is barely mentioned in the strictly theological writings, and this is the notion of ἔρως. Its significance for Proclus is, I think, fairly obvious, provided that it is related to the other metaphysical concepts in his system, but it is worth making a brief outline at this point because some controversies have arisen in the past.

The history of the concept of 'love' in Greek Philosophy is the subject-matter of an impressive study by Nygren who has a number of interesting things to say about its usage in later Neoplatonism. In particular, he sees the role of Proclus in the transformation of the original Greek notion of appetitive love into the Christian doctrine of ἀγάπη as being especially significant. We shall return to what he says on this point later on, but to begin with we must note exactly what he says about the importance of love in Proclus' metaphysical system as a whole. Concerning the *Elements of Theology* he writes: 'Although this work of Proclus contains his doctrine of Eros from beginning to end, it is remarkable that the term itself nowhere seems to occur',¹ and a little further on he shows precisely what he means. 'The whole cosmic process—remaining, procession and return—is thus under the dominion of Eros'.² What this writer says is of considerable significance, for if love performs such a role it is clearly one of the most important of all Proclus' concepts, and if so it is surprising that it could be omitted from the discussions where it would be most appropriately considered. Nygren's interpretation has been fairly influential, and a very similar conception of Proclus' doctrine of love underlies a more recent study by De Vogel. Concerning the omission of the doctrine from the *Platonic Theology* she remarks: 'To be sure, it *might*

¹ A. Nygren: *Agape and Eros* (translated by P. S. Watson), London 1953, p. 566, n. 2.

² Nygren, *op. cit.* p. 575.

have been there,—that is to say, it is ‘just’ the word ἔρωϝ that is lacking’.¹ Such being the state of modern scholarly opinion, we should perhaps make a brief survey of the concept in Proclus’ writings, and attempt to determine whether the above assessments are correct.

The *Alcibiades Commentary* is our best source for this doctrine, and perhaps the first thing of importance about love which we learn is that it must be conceived as a form of activity (*in Alcib.* 117. 9-10): ὁ μὲν θεῖος ἔρωϝ ἐνέργειά ἐστίν.² This gives us an important piece of information, for we already know that activity is a very precise concept for Proclus, and plays an important role in the spiritual world. If love is an activity, it would be reasonable to conclude that love like activity manifests itself in two forms: (i) as the complete cycle of remaining, procession, and reversion, and (ii) as the third element in such a triadic formation. There is evidence that love is visualized by Proclus as occurring in precisely these forms.

(i) In one passage, love is said to descend from the intelligible to the intra-mundane sphere causing everything to revert upon divine beauty (*in Alcib.* 52. 10-12): ἄνωθεν οὖν ὁ ἔρωϝ ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν μέχρι τῶν ἐγκοσμίων φοιτᾷ πάντα ἐπιστρέφων ἐπὶ τὸ θεῖον κάλλος. We seem here to have a definite twofold motion attributed to love³ which suggests that its nature is in fact cyclic. Another passage, which is perhaps even more interesting, compares love with the gods. Just as the order of the gods is divided triadically, (*in Alcib.* 30. 14-18) οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡ ἐρωτικὴ πᾶσα τάξις ἐπιστροφῆς ἐστὶν αἰτία τοῖς οὖσιν ἅπασιν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον κάλλος, ἀνάγουσα μὲν τὰ δεύτερα πάντα πρὸς ἐκεῖνο καὶ συνάπτουσα αὐτῷ καὶ ἐνιδρύουσα, πληροῦσα

¹ C. J. de Vogel: ‘Amor quo caelum regitur’, *Vivarium* 1, 1963, p. 29.

² The passage from which this is quoted compares two types of love, θεῖος and ὑβριστής. The differences between these are explained at *in Alcib.* 117. 9ff., and the opposition is coupled with those of active—passive, immaterial—material etc. Socrates’ love for Alcibiades is an example of the first type, while the multitude of Alcibiades’ base loves comes in the second category, and so the opposition between the two concepts of love is an important theme of this dialogue. The contrast of the two types and the analogies involved are discussed in Trouillard, *Bulletin de l’Association G. Budé* 1958, pp. 88-91. From our point of view, it is the θεῖος ἔρωϝ which is important, and so for the remainder of this section we shall confine ourselves to considering that.

³ As we shall see, Nygren advocates a difference of emphasis in interpreting this passage.

δὲ ἀπ' ἐκείνου τὰ μεθ' ἑαυτὴν καὶ ἐπιλάμπουσα τὰς προϋούσας ἐκείθεν τοῦ θείου φωτὸς μεταδόσεις. Here, we find both procession and reversion specifically mentioned, and so it looks very much as though love presides over the whole cyclic motion,¹ and as such would be exactly equivalent to activity in one of its two forms.

(ii) That love is equivalent not only to the whole triadic process, but often specifically to the third element is suggested by a passage later in the same commentary in which love is defined in terms of 'similarity', a concept habitually associated with reversion. (*in Alcib.* 141. 1-4) καὶ αὐτὸς [sc. ὁ ἔρω] δι' ὁμοιότητος ἐπιτελεῖται τῶν ὑφειμένων πρὸς τὰ κρείττονα καὶ διὰ συνδέσεως τῶν ἀτελεστέρων πρὸς τὰ τελειότερα καὶ δι' ἐπιστροφῆς τῶν πληρουμένων πρὸς τὰ τῆς πληρώσεως αἷτια. Thus, love appears to be identical with activity in its other form as well.²

It does indeed seem that love plays a very fundamental role in Proclus' metaphysical thinking, as Nygren and De Vogel maintained. Furthermore, the examples which we found came entirely from the *Alcibiades Commentary*, and so it would appear that these scholars are correct in saying that the doctrine is not prominent in the theological writings. I think that we would be hard pressed to find equivalent passages in the major works. De Vogel makes a suggestion concerning the reason for the omission, namely that the notion of love was not primarily a theological one for Proclus, but rather the result of reflection upon human nature.³ This interpretation is reasonable enough, but it is possible to go a little further by comparing a couple of passages in which Proclus specifically applies the concept of love in the context of the higher realms of the spiritual world.

First, Proclus tells us that, strictly speaking, τὰ νοητά have no need of love, for their degree of unification is already so great that a cohesive force is quite unnecessary (*in Alcib.* 53. 2-3): τὰ μὲν οὖν νοητὰ διὰ τὴν ἄφραστον ἔνωσιν οὐ δεῖται τῆς ἐρωτικῆς μεσότητος. This statement is, of course, very much in line with what we already know about the spiritual world as gradually declining into multiplicity as it descends from the higher to the lower orders,⁴ and would perhaps solve our problem about the

¹ Cf. pp. 81-82.

² Cf. p. 101.

³ De Vogel, *op. cit.* p. 31.

⁴ Cf. p. 64, n. 1.

ambit of love were it not for one or two other passages which do speak of love within this higher realm. One passage, for example interprets Empedocles' unifying cosmic force as the unity which pervades the spiritual world. It comes from the early part of the *Parmenides Commentary* and runs as follows (*in Parm.* 723. 22-30): ὁ καὶ Ἑμπεδοκλῆς ὕστερον ἑωρακώς, ἅτε Πυθαγόρειος καὶ αὐτὸς ὢν, Σφαῖρον ἀπεκάλει πᾶν τὸ νοητὸν ὡς ἡνωμένον ἑαυτῷ, καὶ εἰς ἑαυτὸν συννεύειν τὸν καλλοποιὸν καὶ ἐνοποιὸν διὰ τοῦ κάλλους θεόν· πάντα γὰρ ἐρῶντα ἀλλήλων καὶ ἐφιέμενα ἀλλήλων ἡγνῶται πρὸς ἀλλήλα αἰωνίως, καὶ ἔστιν αὐτῶν ὁ ἔρως νοητός, καὶ ἡ συνουσία καὶ ἡ σύγκρασις ἄφραστος. Furthermore, we find love expressed by the Greek *φιλία* rather than *ἔρως* in Plato's *Timaeus*,¹ and so Proclus is forced to accept its usage in contexts other than that of purely human affairs.

What conclusions then can we draw from this evidence? It seems clear that, for the reasons stated above, Proclus feels that the concept of love is not at its most appropriate in the theological sphere. The unity of the higher realm is so great that there is little need for such a concept ἐκεῖ, hence the absence of any real doctrine of love in the theological writings. However, Plato's authority had shown that *φιλία* at least could not be confined totally to the human context,² and so occasionally Proclus allows it in the higher sense. These are the safest conclusions to draw from the evidence of the various passages, and we see that it more or less confirms the opinions considered at the beginning of this section. There is, however, one further aspect of Nygren's position which is worth examining, and this is undoubtedly what he would consider to be the most important question of all.

Nygren compares Proclus' notion of love with that of earlier Greek philosophers. In the case of the latter, he concludes, love is basically an appetitive concept and a desire for something lacking. In Neoplatonic terms, we can say that it is purely a motion of ascent. With Proclus, however, he believes that a real change has come about, for he writes: '*Eros has changed its direction*. It is no

¹ *Timaeus* 32c. Proclus' interpretation of this passage is expounded in the third book of his commentary on the dialogue, cf. *in Tim.* II. 52. 20ff.

² At *Th. Pl.* 183. *φιλία* as a cosmic force is defined. It is to be associated with *κοινωνία* as representing the assimilation of one spiritual order to the next. His use of the term in this passage is no doubt influenced by its occurrence in the *Timaeus*.

longer merely an ascending love, but also and primarily a love that *descends*'.¹ The text on which he bases this assertion is the second passage quoted in the present section (*in Alcib.* 52. 10-12).

It will, no doubt, already be clear that the present author takes a rather different view of this passage. First, it will be remembered that this passage was quoted earlier as being a description of the whole causal cycle, and not primarily of the procession as Nygren argues. The wording of the passage shows that two motions are described, not just one, and although love is here associated with the descending motion, it is obviously treated in this way only as a prelude to the reversion which is the more important part of the process. This appears also to be the case with the other passages quoted in this connection. Secondly, we should perhaps realize that the most crucial factor is undoubtedly the equation of love with activity, a point which Nygren ignores, and activity for Proclus is never simply a descent, but always a descent coupled with an ascent, that is to say a complete causal cycle. One might perhaps argue that the mention of a descent even in connection with a corresponding ascent is remarkable enough in a discussion of love by a Greek philosopher. That may well be. However, the cyclic process is a concept older than Proclus, and perhaps for this reason his concept of ἐρως may be less of a departure from earlier ideas than some writers have believed.²

¹ Nygren, *op. cit.* pp. 569-570.

² Proclus' concept of 'descending love' has been discussed in addition by A. H. Armstrong: 'Platonic Eros and Christian Agape', *Downside Review* 1961, pp. 115-117, and (à propos the views of Nygren and Armstrong) by J. M. Rist: *Eros and Psyche*, Toronto 1964, pp. 214-216.

APPENDIX II

αὐθυπόστατος οὐσία

In the course of this study, we have observed the whole causal process of remaining, procession, and reversion, and this has appeared in the form of a motion undergone by an effect in relation to its cause. However, it is quite clear that Proclus believes that there are other forms of spiritual motion besides this which, although likewise consisting of remaining, procession, and reversion, differ from the type which we have been considering hitherto in their direction.¹ It is well worth examining this important corollary to Proclus' usual doctrine not only because of its intrinsic interest, but because it will help to throw further light on the nature of that puzzling concept of the 'self-constituted entity' (αὐθυπόστατος οὐσία).

We should start from an interesting passage in the early part of the *Alcibiades Commentary* which presents us with a piece of rather surprising information. (*in Alcib.* 20. 1-5) ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ εἶδη τῆς ἐπιστροφῆς τριττά· πᾶν γὰρ τὸ ἐπιστρεφόμενον ἢ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον ἐπιστρέφει ἑαυτοῦ διὰ τὴν ἀπόπτωσιν τῆς οἰκείας τελειότητος ἢ πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον ἀνάγεται διὰ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ζωῆς καὶ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐνεργείας ἢ πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐπιστρέφει κατὰ τὴν σύστοιχον ἑαυτῷ γνῶσιν καὶ τὸ μέσον εἶδος τῆς κινήσεως. Of course, we might have expected the second of these three directions of motion, for this is the type which we have been considering in our analyses of the causal process. However, the statement that reversion can take place upon something lower seems to go against the general dictates of Proclus' philosophy as we have so far understood it, while the idea that it can be reflexive is an altogether new conception.² The passage, moreover, cannot be dismissed as uncharacteristic or exceptional in any way for, although there appears to be no other description of the three types of motion together, a number of other passages seem to develop part of the doctrine. These passages undoubtedly present us with our main problem of interpretation, for they deal

¹ The term 'direction' is, of course, to be taken in a non-spatial sense. Its precise meaning in this context will appear from the passage quoted below.

² We did, however, allude to the doctrine without explanation on pp. 10-11.

not with the three types of motion but with two of the three, and the terminology which they employ is variable. In some passages (I), Proclus speaks of the procession (προῖέναι) and reversion (ἐπιστροφή) of an entity upon a higher (a) which he contrasts with the procession and reversion of an entity upon itself (b), while in other passages (II) Proclus speaks of the activity (ἐνέργεια) of an entity within itself (a) which he contrasts with the activity of an entity outside itself (b). We must examine each of these categories very carefully in the next few pages.¹

(I) In the *Elements of Theology*, Proclus elaborates the doctrine of the self-constituted in a series of important propositions. We started our investigations into the nature of spiritual motion by noting that these principles transcend the realms of space and time and form the content of the spiritual world,² but what is important for us to consider at the moment is that they are described as proceeding from and reverting upon themselves. In this group of propositions, Proclus seems to be primarily concerned with the reversion, but of course the complementary motion of procession is equally important, as the following passage shows (*El. Th.* 44. 11-14): πᾶν τὸ αὐθυπόστατον πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐστὶν ἐπιστρεπτικόν. εἰ γὰρ ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ πρόεισι, καὶ τὴν ἐπιστροφήν ποιήσεται πρὸς ἑαυτό· ἄφ' οὗ γὰρ ἡ πρόοδος ἐκάστοις, εἰς τοῦτο καὶ ἡ τῇ προόδῳ σύστοιχος ἐπιστροφή. Throughout this section of the work, Proclus is anxious to compare these entities with others which proceed and revert in relation to the higher (τὰ ἄφ' ἐτέρας αἰτίας προϊόντα), but we know from remarks made elsewhere that the self-constituted are themselves not precluded from engaging in both types of motion.³ This doctrine is a very interesting one, and adds a new dimension to our understanding of the nature of the spiritual world. We shall see a little further on exactly what the significance of this conception is for our general understanding of Proclus' system, but two aspects of the theory should be noted immediately. First, we should observe the terminology in which it is expressed, that of procession and reversion, while in second place we should note that the two

¹ To aid the comprehension of a rather complex exposition, I preserve throughout the same numbering for the different varieties of motion.

² Cf. p. 7.

³ Cf. *in Tim.* III. 39. 4-5: τὰ δὲ θεῖα καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἀρχηγικῶν αἰτίων καὶ παρ' ἑαυτῶν. The link between causation and motion is already established.

types of motion seem to coincide with the second and third of those mentioned in the first passage.¹

(II) In other passages, Proclus makes yet another subdivision within the causal process and distinguishes two types of motion which he calls 'internal' and 'external' activity. For example, in the *Parmenides Commentary* he lays down a general rule (*in Parm.* 79I. 23-26): τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ κατὰ φύσιν τῶν πραγμάτων τάξις, τῆς μὲν ἔνδον ἐνεργείας ἡρτῆσθαι τὴν ἔξω προϊούσαν, and similar ideas are expressed in a number of other passages which the reader can examine for himself.² In this case, we should note that the two types of motion which are mentioned are described as activities, and not specifically as processions and reversions as in the last category. Moreover the two motions appear to correspond to the third and first of those mentioned in the first passage, for the internal activity seems to be parallel to the reflexive motion of this passage while the addition of the word 'proceeding' (προϊούσα) to the description of the external activity shows clearly that the motion is one of descent rather than ascent as in the first category.³

The types of motion to which these passages refer seem to be equivalent to those mentioned in the threefold classification of reversions at the beginning of this section. However, certain other problems must be solved before we can be sure that these identifications are really intended, and in addition we must attempt to understand the nature of the different types of motion. Expressed simply, what significance does the direction of motion have in the context of the spiritual world as Proclus understands it? Perhaps the best way to study these questions is to classify them under three general headings: (i) In principle, can we equate descriptions of different types of procession and reversion with descriptions of different types of activity (that is to say, can we equate either of the motions described in category (I) with either

¹ For the logical significance of the doctrine of self-constituted entities cf. Lloyd 1967, pp. 308-309. The notion of ἐπιστροφή πρὸς ἑαυτὸ has been discussed profitably by W. Beierwaltes: 'Philosophische Marginalien zu Proklos-Texten', *Philosophische Rundschau* 10, 1962, pp. 76-84, and by P. Courcelle: 'Le "Connais-toi toi-même" chez les Néo-platoniciens grecs', *Le Néoplatonisme*, Paris 1971, pp. 158-162.

² Cf. *in Alcib.* 132. 11ff., *in Tim.* III. 25. 11-16.

³ For the history and importance of the doctrine of the two types of activity in Neoplatonism cf. Lloyd 1955-56, pp. 146-147, Rutten 1956, and Hadot 1968, pp. 335-337.

of the motions described in category (II))? (ii) What is the precise relation between the two motions described as processions and reversions (in category (I))? (iii) What is the precise relation between the two motions described as activities (in category (II))?

(i) According to Proclus' general principles, we should expect it to be possible to identify motions described as processions and reversions with motions described as activities, for the strictest definition of activity is 'the combination of procession and reversion in a single cyclic process'.¹ However, it would be reasonable to be cautious in the present context, and to try to find some evidence for such an equation actually within passages which speak of the different directions of motion. Fortunately, there is such evidence, and so the general hypothesis seems to be borne out in this specific case. The passage from the *Parmenides Commentary* which we have considered above comes from a context which makes a clear equation between ἡ ἔνδον ἐνέργεια and ἡ πρὸς αὐτὸν στροφή (*in Parm.* 791. 17-18), and several other passages tell a similar story.² Thus, the detailed evidence can be taken as giving support to our initial impressions, and there is little more that need be said on this question.

(ii) The question of the relation between the two types of motion in category (I) is, however, considerably more difficult to answer, and some controversy has arisen over this matter in the past. However, modern scholarship seems generally to support the idea that the two motions can in some way be reduced to one another. This general idea has been formulated in slightly different ways by various scholars, and we should now look at two of these interpretations.³

Rosán investigates this important question in connection with the distinction between what he terms 'independent possessed characteristics' and 'dependent possessed characteristics' in Proclus'

¹ Cf. p. 81.

² Cf. *in Alcib.* 139. 20ff.

³ In the sequel I have selected two modern interpretations which are, in effect, about the only reasoned accounts of the problem. Most writers have been content to gloss over the matter, a particularly sad state of affairs in view of the far-reaching implications of the doctrine which we shall see below. One other interpreter who has considered the question with some care is Dodds, cf. his notes on *El. Th.* props. 40-51 (*Dodds* 1963, pp. 223-227). This writer is cautious in interpreting the doctrine, and emphasizes its ambivalence. I shall argue further for ambivalence in the argument to be developed below.

philosophy, the former being equivalent to the self-constituted entities. "These "sparks" or dependent characteristics are usually possessed only by material or sensible things, so that they must be physically inseparable from their possessors; both the dependent characteristics and their possessors are limited to the world of time, so that they must come into being and pass away. And the underlying receivers or ὑποκείμενα of such material possessors therefore must receive one characteristic after another; thus they cannot return to any single cause but to different causes at different times, and they must always return to causes which for this reason are outside of themselves. On the other hand, the independent characteristics are possessed by things which themselves are immaterial because they are indeed possessed characteristics in their own right; how this is possible will be explained later.¹ But here it is sufficient to say that all independent characteristics are eternal and therefore separable from their possessors, since two immaterial things cannot be said to be physically connected. On the other hand, the underlying receiver of an eternal possessor clearly receives one and only one characteristic, since it never exchanges this for another; the possessor therefore returns to a single cause, that is, its single possessed characteristic, and this cannot be *physically* outside of itself, inasmuch as both are immaterial, so that such an eternal and independent possessor is said to "return to within itself" (πρὸς ἑαυτὸ ἐπιστρέφειν).² To summarize the position expressed in this account, we may say that spiritual entities cannot literally be outside their causes, since both cause and effect are part of an atemporal and non-spatial world. Thus, they can be described as reverting upon themselves in the process through which they are hypostatized, and the reflexive and ascending motions of the self-constituted amount to the same thing.

A similar idea of reduction underlies the more recent interpretation of Hadot, who has occasion to consider the relationship between certain doctrines which he considers to be Porphyrian and those of Proclus. This argument hinges on the postulation of an identity between the reversion of self-constituted entity upon itself and

¹ The author here refers to the relationship between, for example, an intellect and a henad, both of which are (immaterial) spiritual entities.

² *Rosán* 1949, p. 86.

its reversion upon its prior cause. He writes: 'Chez Proclus, comme chez Damascius, le retour à soi est donc retour au Père, puisque le soi n'est vraiment lui-même que dans son état originel de repos . . . Cette identité entre conversion vers soi et conversion vers le Père suppose la notion d'autoconstitué: l'autoconstitué n'est pas indépendant d'une cause; il est confondu originellement avec sa cause, mais il se donne les moyens de s'en distinguer . . . Pour l'autoconstitué, le retour à soi est donc retour à son premier moment, c'est-à-dire à son état de repos en sa cause'.¹ On this interpretation, the reversion of a self-constituted principle upon itself cannot be separated from its reversion upon the higher, since it must be itself identical with its cause during the initial phase of the whole causal process. It differs, perhaps, from the previous interpretation in that it does not completely obliterate the distinction between the two types of motion, but it agrees with it inasmuch as the dichotomy is to be explained by an essentially reductive process.

The type of interpretation advocated by Rosán and Hadot is supported by evidence in Proclus' writings, and in particular the doctrine of mutual interpenetration which we considered earlier² gives some ground for the belief that the reflexive motion is identical with the ascending variety. Intellect, for example, contains within itself elements of being and life, and so by reverting upon the higher hypostases it is in a sense reverting upon itself. The metaphysical concept of the effect as containing elements derived from its causes may thus be held to pave the way for an identification of the two types of motion, and it seems in particular to be the thought behind those passages in the *Timaeus Commentary* which describe the relationship between the δημιουργός and the παράδειγμα. For example, we find Proclus saying (*in Tim.* II. 93. 11-13): *περὶ ἑαυτὸν* [sc. ὁ δημιουργός] *ἔστραπται καὶ τὰ νοητὰ θεᾶται περὶ αὐτὰ ἐνεργῶν, ἃ δὴ γίνεται κέντρα τῆς δημιουργικῆς νοήσεως*, and we can perhaps explain this by saying that inasmuch as the δημιουργός contains the παράδειγμα, his reversion upon it is at the same time a reversion upon himself. Other passages can be found which contain similar ideas and, although Rosán and Hadot produce none of these passages as evidence themselves,³ I think they can reasonably be held to support their view.

¹ Hadot, *op. cit.* p. 323 and n. 2. Cf. p. 299 and p. 305 ff.

² Cf. pp. 17-22.

³ Rosán's interpretation is based on the exploitation of what may have

Despite its immediate attractiveness, however, this interpretation does seem to run counter to what we already know about Proclus' conception of the causal process. To establish an equation between the reflexive and ascending motions inevitably leads to a breaking-down of the distinction between cause and effect, and if we view the matter in terms of the standard definition of remaining and procession, then clearly on the interpretation of Rosán and Hadot the aspect of identity between cause and effect is being emphasized to the apparent exclusion of the equally important aspect of difference. Perhaps it is possible to revise their scheme slightly to take more account of the peculiarities of the causal process.

A further examination of the notion of the circular path of the effect may help here. Earlier, we studied the way in which according to Proclus an effect undergoes circular motion in relation to its cause, and we saw that it could only revert at the end of the process to a state of similarity to the cause. It could never achieve identity with it for this latter can only occur at the stage of remaining.¹ Thus, the relationship between an effect and its cause is one of identity combined with difference. In view of all this, it seems reasonable that the relationship which we should seek to establish between the two types of motion should also be one of identity combined with difference. To return to our earlier example, Intellect (the effect) can only contain being and life (its causes) when the latter are assimilated to the 'intellectual' level.² In other words, Intellect is identical with its causes inasmuch as it contains them, but different from them inasmuch as it contains them in a fashion suitably modified in accordance with the hierarchical structure of the system. Moreover, inasmuch as Intellect is identical with its causes it proceeds and reverts upon itself, but inasmuch as

been for Proclus a subconscious presupposition, and so he could perhaps not be expected to produce any direct textual evidence. Hadot, although he refers specifically to Proclus in the passage, mentions no passage from his writings which really says anything in support of his case. In fact, his interpretation at this point relies mainly on one passage in Damascius (*Dub. et Sol.* I. 171. 4ff.) which is by no means without ambiguity. Furthermore it need not imply agreement with the doctrines of Proclus. Fortunately, there are passages in Proclus which we shall consider below, and these suggest that Proclus did think rather in the way Hadot suggests.

¹ Cf. p. 50.

² Cf. pp. 17-18.

it is different from its causes it may fairly be said to proceed and revert upon those causes. The upshot is that the passage which we considered a little earlier on and which seemed to identify the two types of motion tells only half of the story. It does indeed refer to the aspect of identity which is involved in the causal relationship, but it is of the greatest importance that we should bear in mind the fact that there is also a crucial element of difference which is just as important for the comprehension of the process as a whole.

(iii) With all this before us, we should be able to dispose of the final question concerning the relation between the two types of motion in category (II) fairly easily. If the relation between the reflexive motion and the motion of descent is analogous to that which we have seen to be the case between the reflexive motion and the motion of ascent, we should expect it also to be one of similarity. There is no direct statement of this any more than there was in the earlier case, but a passage which describes the nature of activity in the *Platonic Theology* suggests that we are indeed on the right track. (*Th. Pl.* 283) δεῖ γὰρ δὴ πανταχοῦ τὰς ἔξω προΐούσας ἐνεργείας εἰκόνας εἶναι τῶν ἑνδον. Here, the use of the word εἰκών is of great significance, for we know from the investigations pursued earlier in this study that the relation between an image and that which it copies is precisely that relationship of similarity required.¹

We began with a passage which described three different types of motion and this has led to a fairly lengthy discussion about the precise significance of this threefold classification. No doubt our final conclusions are already obvious. The classification itself provides a typical example of Proclus' philosophical method of forming new metaphysical concepts by means of the juxtaposition of contraries, and our solution to the problem of the relation between the different types of motion mentioned in this classification is in terms of such a characteristic juxtaposition. The three types of motion are from one point of view identical with one another, but from another point of view different, for each pair (I and II) of motions involves a relation of similarity, while the reflexive motions in each of the two categories are identical.

¹ Cf. p. 85.

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